AFTER THE BATTLE

ST. MALO 1944

Number 33

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Front Cover: The battle for St. Malo captured by a combat war photographer of the US Signal Corps. Company I of the 331st Infantry Regiment, US 83rd Division, advance up the Rue de la Gardelle on August 8, 1944. Thirty-seven years later we returned to the same spot to take our comparison picture.

Centre Pages: The island of Cezembre off St. Malo suffered possibly the most concentrated bombing and shelling of the entire war. Its cratered and blasted surface remains, as do the ruins of the German fortifications and guns.

Back Page: Cezembre is a unique sanctuary; for 'after the battle' enthusiasts . . . and seabirds.

Acknowledgements: The St. Malo story is extracted from the *United States Army in World War II Breakout and Pursuit* by Martin Blumenson published by the Office of the Chief of Military History, Washington D.C. Cezembre is also based on the official history with additional material from the Channel Islands Occupation Review 1975 by Peter Bryans and Denis Holmes.

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On January 19, 1944, the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, the German Armed Forces High Command, had designated as fortresses all the ports along the Atlantic and Channel coasts that had been extensively fortified: Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne, Le Havre, Cherbourg, St. Malo, Brest, Lorient and St. Nazaire. To each was assigned a commander who took an oath to defend his fortress to the death, and Hitler was sorely vexed when Cherbourg fell so quickly in June 1944 after a brief struggle. Anxious that the same fate should not befall the other 'Festungen', Hitler issued a specific order that these were to be held 'to the last man, to the last cartridge' and that the port facilities were to be destroyed in the process. Although Hitler thereby hoped to deny logistical bases to the Allies necessary to sustain the invasion, his decision meant that upwards of a quarter of a million men were consigned to static defence, destined to be eventually surrounded and captured.

With the American breakout at the beginning of August, St. Malo was the first fortress which lay in the path of General George S. Patton's troops advancing westwards along the 'North Shore' as the Americans called the north Brittany coastline. To try to preserve intact the railway line which runs from Brest to Rennes parallel with the coast (a vital route for supplies from the port), Patton created Task Force A with the goal of securing several vital bridges on the railway before the Germans could demolish them while the 6th Armored Division raced to Brest.

Task Force A had a strength of about 3,500 men. Its headquarters, the 1st Tank Destroyer Brigade, controlled the 6th Tank Destroyer Group, the 15th Cavalry Group, and the 159th Engineer Battalion. The task force commander, Brigadier General Herbert L. Earnest, had requested an infantry attachment but no infantry was available during the hectic early days of August. The possibility that Task Force A would make contact with a substantial number of French Resistance forces provided hope that the FFI would perform such infantry functions as line of communications guard and command post security.

ST. MALO 1944

The walled city of St. Malo takes its name from the Welsh monk who fled there in the 6th century, later believed to be the first bishop of Aleth — St. Servan — which lies in the foreground. Then St. Malo was a granite islet but an ancient causeway subsequently linked it to the mainland.

To the American commanders studying their maps, the Avranches — St. Malo area was much like the Normandy coastline where the OVERLORD landings had been made. The Bay of Mont St. Michel resembled, in miniature, the shape of the Bay of the Seine. The St. Malo peninsula appeared to be the Cotentin peninsula seen through the wrong end of a telescope. The harbour of St. Malo was a smaller version of Cherbourg. The Rance River estuary provided a west coast for the St. Malo peninsula as the ocean did for the Cotentin. At the base of the Rance estuary, Dinan was in the same relation to St. Malo as Avranches was to Cherbourg.

By August 3 Task Force A was through the Avranches — Pontaubault bottleneck but came up against resistance some twenty miles westward at Dol-de-Bretagne. Although General Earnest had expected some delays from small German units attacking the column's flanks, when he learned that Dol was strongly defended, he decided to bypass the town and press on to Dinan. However, even as his men drove towards his next objective, Major General Troy H. Middleton, VIII Corps Commander (initially assigned to the US First Army but now part of the Third), instructed him to probe northward to test the St. Malo defences. Although General Patton had made no provision for the capture of St. Malo, General Middleton was increasingly concerned at the thought of leaving a large concentration of German forces in his rear which might easily develop into a threat to the long lines of communication which would be an inevitable feature of the Brittany campaign.

It had been General Earnest's intention, true to the Patton ideal of bold armoured exploitation, to 'go by it without even looking at the city' but, faced with the request, he split Task Force A into two, one column pressing on westwards while the other moved north towards St. Malo. Increasingly heavy German resistance was encountered south of Chateauneuf-d'Ille-et-Vilaine and, anxious not to become embroiled in a battle which would delay his thrust to capture the important railway bridges and, bearing in mind that he lacked his own infantry, General Earnest

radioed for additional troops. Infantrymen from the 83rd Division (commanded by Major General Robert C. Macon) were, in fact, following in the footsteps of Task Force A ready to help the 6th Armored in the capture of Brest. As Patton believed that once bypassed the Germans would only make a token defence of St. Malo, he only agreed to assign one regiment from the 83rd Division to participate in the attack.

Developments in the St. Malo region on the morning of August 4 seemed to support Patton's view, since Germans manning outpost positions that comprised the outer defences of the St. Malo fortress withdrew north towards Chateauneuf, a move that appeared to presage a show of force before capitulation. However, the experience of Task Force A that afternoon led to quite the opposite conclusion that the Germans had withdrawn to consolidate and strengthen their defences. Whatever the German intentions, it was obvious that the Americans needed additional troops around St. Malo.

Hoping that immediate, resolute action might achieve the desired result, General Middleton ordered General Macon to bring the entire 83rd Division into the area to make a co-ordinated attack in conjunction with Task Force A. The result of the attack on August 5 proved that the reduction of St. Malo would take some time. Unwilling to hold Task Force A any longer, General Middleton ordered General Earnest to break contact during the night of August 5 and on the following morning to continue his mission of sweeping Brittany's north shore. During the hours of darkness, Task Force A slipped out of the area, bypassed Dinan to the south, and moved on westward leaving the 83rd Division with the daunting task of capturing Fortress St. Malo.

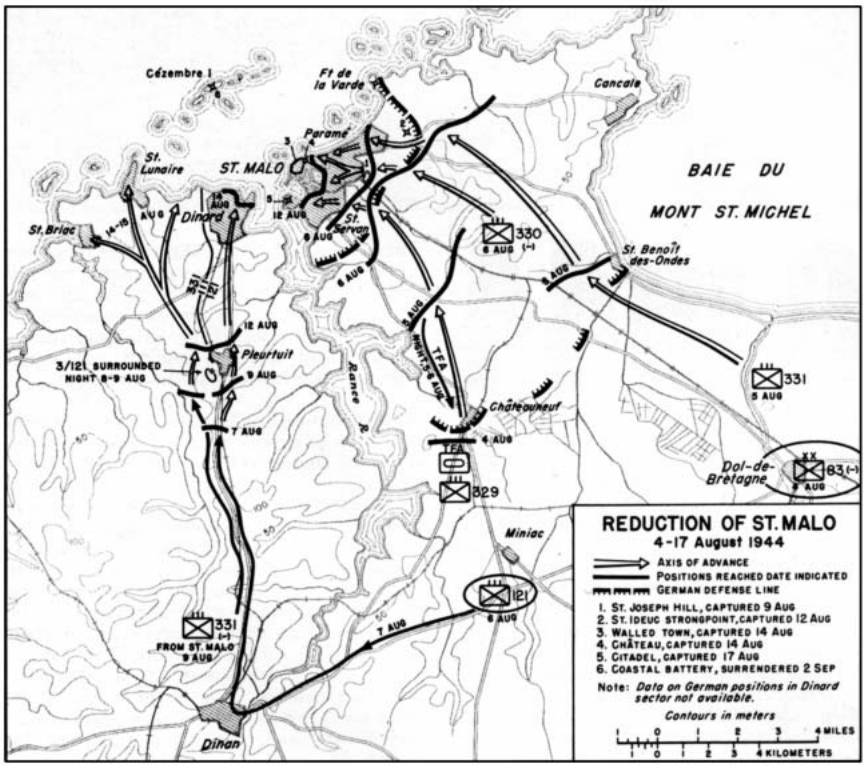
Few Americans suspected at the beginning of August that St. Malo would be difficult to take, for the rapidity of the advance into Brittany had brought a heady optimism. Yet studies made in England before the invasion indicated that there were strong defences at the harbour, and contact with the defenders in the early days of August should have confirmed the fact that the Germans would make a determined stand there. Not until August 5, however, did American commanders acknowledge that the Germans were capable of stubborn defence. By then, General Middleton and the VIII Corps, and particularly General Macon and the 83rd Division, were aware that they had a nasty job ahead of them.

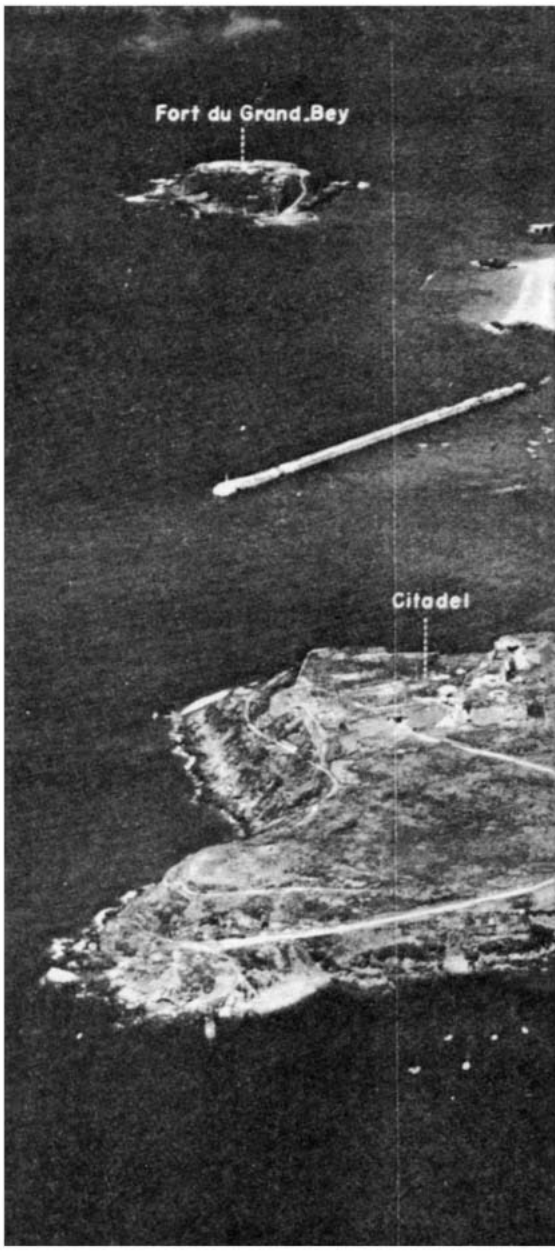
St. Malo had been used by the Germans as a naval base for coastal operations and as a supply base for the Channel Islands and the port could accommodate medium-sized vessels and had facilities to unload cargo at the rate of a thousand tons a day. Although naval planners had informed General Eisenhower 'that we are likely to be disappointed in its possibilities as a port' and Frenchmen had warned that there were about 10,000 German troops garrisoned in the fortress, the Americans estimated that there were only 3,000-6,000 defenders and that the harbour would be a valuable auxiliary supply port.

Though estimates of German strength were incorrect, American intelligence was right in its growing realisation that the enemy in St. Malo firmly intended to resist. The Festungkommandant, Oberst Andreas von Aulock, had rejected a proposal by French civilian officials that he surrender in order to save the nearby towns from damage. He had announced that 'he would defend St. Malo to the last man even if the last man had to be himself'. That he could make a strong fight in support of his boast soon became evident.

In early August German outposts between Dol-de-Bretagne and Dinan were withdrawn to the Chateauneuf — St. Benoit-des-Ondes line across the base of the peninsula, which consisted of anti-tank obstacles and guns, road-blocks, wire entanglements, minefields, and machine gun emplacements. Although the co-ordinated attack, launched on August 5 by the 83rd Division and Task Force A (the latter alone taking 655 prisoners), pierced this line and secured Chateauneuf, the stubborn opposition gave advance notice that the defence would stiffen as the Germans drew more closely around St. Malo.

Hoping to outflank and isolate the St. Malo defensive complex, on August 5 General Macon sent a battalion of the 329th Infantry across the Rance in assault boats to cut the Dinan — Dinard road, a move that was to be the preliminary action for a swift thrust to Dinard. Though the battalion crossed the river, the men uncovered such strong resistance on the west bank of the Rance that General Macon quickly recalled them. Adding impetus to this decision was the discovery by the 331st Infantry, on the right of the divisional sector, of a much easier approach to St. Malo. Moving north in the area east of Chateauneuf toward Cancale, on the east coast of the St. Malo peninsula, the 331st encountered light covering forces defending canals, road blocks, and minefields. What the Germans were covering was their consolidation of forces on the main defence line of St. Malo.





On the St. Malo side of the Rance, the

One of a series of after-the-war oblique aerial shots taken by Major Hatlem to illustrate important World War II battle sites. Unfortunately there is now no trace of any of the originals taken over France, in the Audio Visual archives in Washington, hence our reproduction from the official USA Army historical volume 'Breakout and Pursuit' published in 1961 on which our story is based.

fortress encompassed three communities on the western tip of the peninsula. In the centre was the walled town of St. Malo, originally an island accessible from the mainland only at low tide. Guarding the landward entrance into town was the fifteenth century chateau of Anne of Brittany. Protecting the town from seaward invasion were thick ramparts of stone. East of St. Malo and adjacent to it was the relatively modern suburb of Parame, where villas and resort hotels lined broad boulevards. South of St. Malo and across the harbour was the fishing port of St. Servan-sur-Mer. Not really on the ocean but on the Rance River estuary, St. Servan was the ferry terminus for the regular boat runs to Dinard. Finally, dug into a rocky promontory on a peninsula between St. Malo harbour and the port of St. Servan was a casemated fort called the Citadel, the headquarters of Oberst Andreas von Aulock.

Although the Germans at St. Malo and Dinard were fighting with their backs to the sea, they had powerful support from artillery placed on the small island of Cezembre, not quite three miles offshore, which controlled the deep water channel to St. Malo and helped to defend the sea route to the German-occupied Channel Islands.

Hundreds of volunteer and impressed Organisation Todt workers had poured tons of concrete over steel for more than two years constructing the defences but still the fortifications of St. Malo were not finished. Permanent coastal guns, for example, had not been installed in the Citadel, and only half a dozen field pieces, still with wheels, stood provisionally behind the firing apertures. The Germans had also planned to dig an enormous anti-tank ditch across the St. Malo peninsula from the Rance to the sea and flood it with water but the excavations were far from complete. Another weakness of the fortress was that it faced seaward against an expected Allied invasion from that direction and, to that end, barbed wire and other obstacles decorated the beaches.

Despite these deficiencies, the Germans were able to adjust quickly to a threat from the landward side of St. Malo. Enabling them to do so was a ring of strongpoints that barred the ground approaches. The most important were the coastal Fort la Varde, east of St. Malo; the strongpoint of St. Ideuc on the eastern edge of Parame and positions on St. Joseph's Hill in the south-east outskirts of St. Malo. The defence installations were mutually supporting and underground wires assured telephonic communication among the principal garrisons. Stores of supplies — ammunition, water, and food — had been stockpiled in preparation against siege. In the estimation of the German Land Forces HQ on the Western Front, the St. Malo fortifications were the most advanced of any of the fortresses in the west.

Oberst Andreas von Aulock was somewhat disappointed to have been relegated to the command of a static fortress for he would have preferred to gain striking offensive victories for his Fuehrer. Yet whether he understood the strategic importance of Hitler's fortress policy or not, he prepared to do what was required of him. A veteran of Stalingrad who promised to make his defence of St. Malo 'another Stalingrad', von Aulock stated, 'I was placed in command of this fortress. I did not request it. I will execute the orders I have received and, doing my duty as a soldier, I will fight to the last stone.'

Von Aulock, who had always been correct

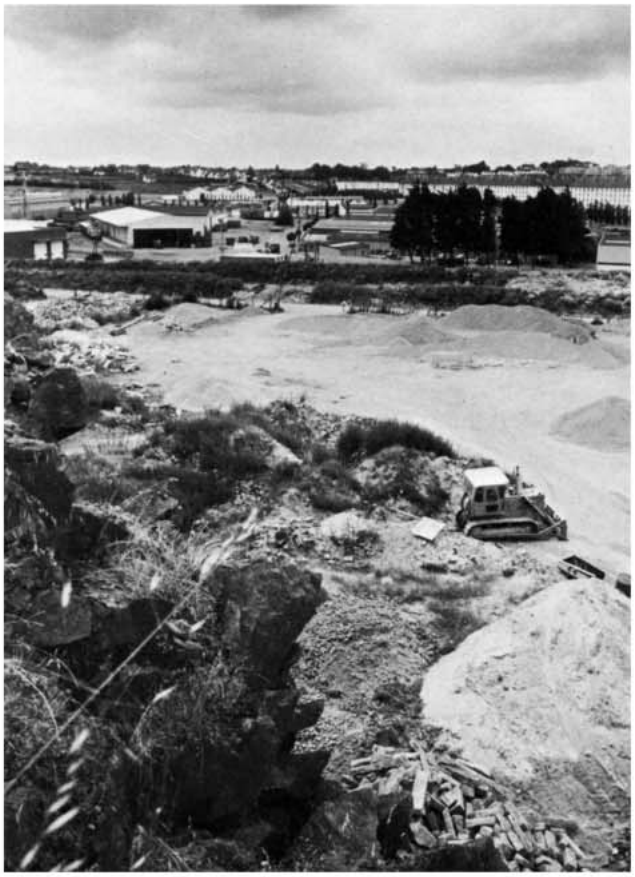
in his official relations with the French, could not understand why the inhabitants of St. Malo regarded him as an enemy. For their own good, he had suggested soon after the Allied landings in Normandy that the French evacuate the town which was sure to be a battlefield. Despite Allied air bombardment on July 17 and again on August 1, very few families had departed so the approach of US ground forces prompted Aulock to clear his decks. Calling several town officials into conference on August 3, he informed them that they were fine fellows but that he preferred to have them 'in front of me rather than behind my back.' Furthermore, since he wished to spare the population harm from the battle about to commence, most of the civilians had to go.

To French requests that he save historic St. Malo from destruction by declaring it an open city, von Aulock answered that he had referred that question to Generalfeldmarschall Guenther von Kluge (German C-in-C West) who had transmitted it to Hitler. Hitler had replied that in warfare there was no such thing as an historic city. As added justification to help the French comprehend Hitler's decision, von Aulock explained that he commanded several small armed vessels that would have to manoeuvre in St. Malo waters and, since these boats constituted a legitimate military target, he could not declare the town an open city.

Two days later, during the early evening of August 5, a long line of French men, women, and children departed from St. Malo in compliance with von Aulock's order and entered American lines. Displaying white handkerchiefs and flags, carrying suitcases and pushing carts, most of the French population had left their homes reluctantly.

When American troops on August 6 came within range of the artillery on the island of Cezembre, the German guns opened fire and one of the first shells struck the spire of the St. Malo cathedral. The steeple toppled over, a bad omen, the French believed. Later in the day fires broke out in the town. Frenchmen soon became convinced that the Germans had inadvertently spilled petrol while burning codes and documents and that the few SS troops of the garrison with deliberate malice not only refused to permit fire fighters to put out the blaze but started others. The Americans unintentionally assisted by cutting the town's water supply in the hope of encouraging a German surrender, a hope concurred in by the mayor of St. Servan-sur-Mer, who had volunteered the necessary information on the location of the water valves. On the following morning, August 7, the Ger-

St. Joseph's Hill lies on the eastern outskirts of St. Malo immediately to the north of the main railway line to the town. For two days the Germans, dug in on and around the high ground and quarry at its base, withstood an intense pounding by the US 83rd Division. This picture taken in June 1981.

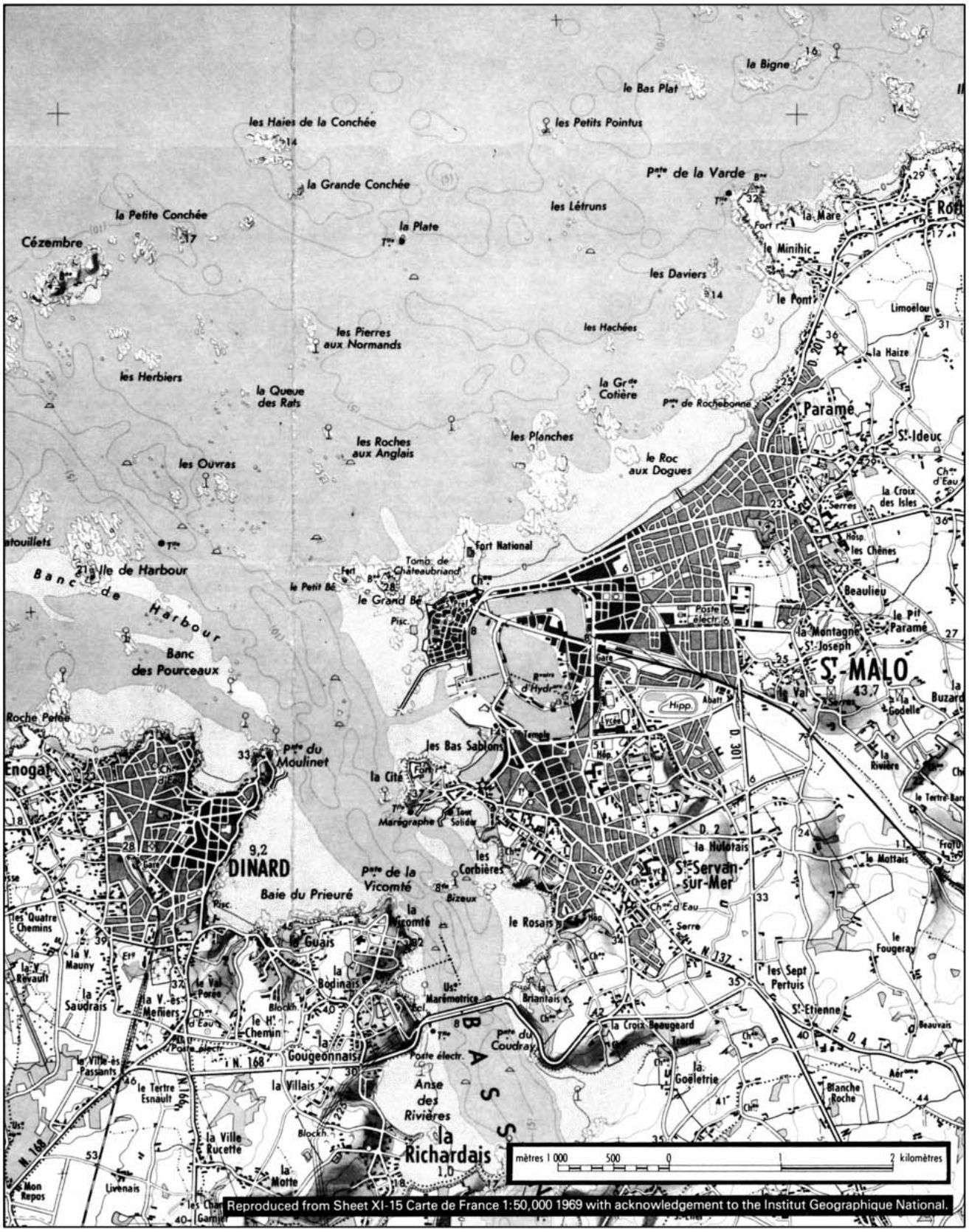


Left: **On August 9 the Germans finally surrendered their positions. Here Private Louis Putens of Baltimore, Maryland draws on a welcome cigarette. Although this was the last battle for one German, von Aulock was to prolong the American capture of St. Malo for another eight days (US Army).** *Right:* **Thirty-seven years later, we climbed the same hill to record the changed scene. Now the Southern Industrial Zone of the city borders the railway which appears further away due to quarrying.**

mans added to the holocaust by setting off prepared demolitions that destroyed the port completely — quays, locks, breakwaters and harbour machinery. For a week, as the town burned, a pall of smoke hung over the St. Malo battlefield.

In contact with the main defences of the St. Malo fortress by the afternoon of August 6, the 83rd Division attacked positions forming a semi-circle from the Rance to the sea. Belts of wire, large minefields, rows of steel gates, anti-tank obstacles and ditches were protected by machine gunners in pillboxes. Though the attack involved co-ordinated action by all three regiments and utilised air power and artillery, advances were markedly limited. Any last illusions that the battle might be swiftly terminated vanished. To reinforce the 83rd Division, General Middleton drew upon the 8th Division at Rennes for an infantry regiment (the 121st) and a medium tank company, which he attached to General Macon's command; took a battalion of the corps artillery that had been attached to the 79th Division and ordered it into the St. Malo area; and requested increased air support.

On August 7 the three organic regiments of the 83rd Division renewed the attack toward St. Malo after a fifteen-minute artillery preparation. In the centre of the divisional sector the German strongpoint on St. Joseph's Hill, tested on the previous day, continued to hold. Guns emplaced in a granite quarry on



Reproduced from Sheet XI-15 Carte de France 1:50,000 1969 with acknowledgement to the Institut Geographique National.

the hill, cavelike troop shelters hewed out of rock, and the dominating ground itself gave the German defenders such advantages that the 330th Infantry (Colonel Robert T. Foster) could not even manoeuvre into position for an actual assault. The only genuine hope of success rested with sustained artillery fire. While division and corps battalions delivered concentrated shelling, the infantry tried to inch up the hill. Not the infantry progress, which was infinitesimal, but constant and severe artillery and tank destroyer pounding for two days finally produced results. On August 9 more than 400 Germans on St. Joseph's Hill laid down their arms and marched out under a white flag.

The elimination of St. Joseph's Hill enabled the troops on both flanks to surge forward rapidly. On the right, Colonel York's 331st Infantry drove northward through Parame to the sea, cutting off the enemy garrisons at St. Ideuc and la Varde. Meanwhile, on the left, Colonel Crabill's 329th Infantry moved through St. Servan to the very gates of the Citadel.

By August 9, after five days of attack, the 83rd Division had eliminated the major strongpoint on St. Joseph's Hill, had knocked out many individual bunkers and pillboxes, had captured about 3,500 prisoners, and was in possession of St. Servan and Parame. Yet for all this, resistance at St. Ideuc and la Varde, in the walled town of St. Malo itself, and fire from the Citadel continued undiminished, while supporting fire from Dinard and Cezembre rained down with telling effect.

After the capture of St. Joseph's Hill, General Macon turned his attention to the elimination of Dinard on the western bank of the Rance. So far the performance of the 8th Division's 121st Infantry, assigned its capture, had been far from brilliant. The quick elimination of Dinard would serve four purposes: it would stop part of the effective artillery fire that came from across the Rance; it would block the possibility that German troops might escape from the St. Malo fortress westward toward Brest; it would release the

The strongpoint at St. Ideuc, some 1,500 yards from the sea, had to be eliminated before the fort at Pointe de la Varde could be approached. Today two underground personnel shelters are all that remain outside the largely rebuilt town.

3rd Battalion of the 121st Infantry which had got itself cut off and surrounded in the village of Pleurtuit, four miles from Dinard; and it would make possible the return of the 121st to its parent organisation for possible participation in a strong attack against Brest, an operation then under discussion. After a battle lasting five days, under General Macon's personal command, Dinard had fallen to the combined efforts of the 121st and 331st Infantry Regiments and some 4,000 Germans had been captured.

While General Macon was personally directing the attack on Dinard, the assistant division commander, Brigadier General Claude B. Ferenbaugh, had taken control of the two remaining regiments of the 83rd Division. The objectives still to be reduced

Fort de la Varde, although lying three miles north-east of St. Malo, was ideally situated to lay down enfilade fire along the entire St. Malo — Parame sea front. As with many of the defences, the Germans had reinforced and extended upon what was originally an old French coastal fortification. The photo *below*, taken in June 1981, shows the view inland. According to notices affixed to the perimeter fence, the fort is now on 'Terrain Militaire' with 'acces interdit'. (As I did not pass my French GCE, I have no idea what that means! — Ed.)

Marked for life could well be a description of the fort today. Although the majority of the casemates survived the American onslaught, it must have been a fearful experience for the defenders. This 'Sechsschartenturm *(below)* has been gouged like a pencil poked into soft butter — with a piece of shell still embedded. The majority of the shots failed to penetrate the foot-thick steel.

were the walled city of St. Malo, the Citadel, and the strongpoints of St. Ideuc and la Varde. General Ferenbaugh concentrated first on the lesser strongholds, St. Ideuc and la Varde, which were small, mutually supporting forts although German artillery at Dinard and Cezembre could fire in support. In reality, St. Ideuc was an outer defence position for la Varde, which was on the coast.

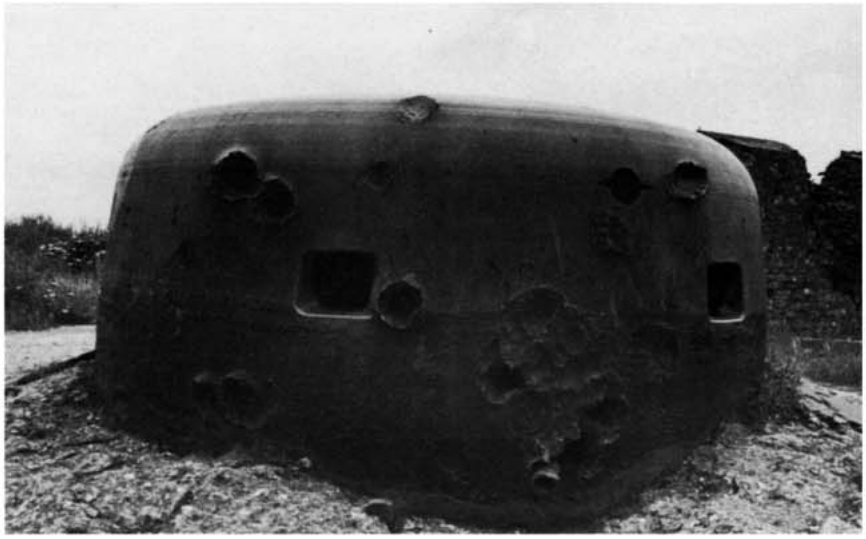
On August 9, while the 329th Infantry patrolled and policed the towns of St. Servan and Parame and prepared to attack the Citadel, the two battalions under the 330th Infantry headquarters attacked toward St. Malo and St. Ideuc. For three days artillery pounded St. Ideuc and infantry and engineers operated against individual pillboxes and bunkers. In the late afternoon of August 12, after a final burst of concentrated artillery fire and an infantry assault, the 160 surviving defenders capitulated. Without pause the assault battalion moved toward la Varde and on the following evening, August 13, captured the fort. Little more than a hundred Germans filed out in surrender.

Meanwhile, the other battalion under the 330th Infantry, with an additional rifle company, had been attacking toward the town of St. Malo. To gain entrance into the walled town, the troops had to secure the Parame — St. Malo causeway. The attack thus took place across an area that funnelled the troops toward the narrow causeway strip. Supported by tanks and tank destroyers, the infantrymen systematically reduced pillboxes and bunkers, measuring their progress by streets. The avenues of Parame became thoroughfares for bullets and shells, and engineers dynamited passageways from house to house to enable the infantrymen to fight forward from one building to another.

Manned by a small garrison employing machine guns and 20mm pieces and overlooking the battle area was the chateau of St. Malo at the far end of the causeway. The thick walls of the chateau, designed to withstand medieval siege, proved equally effective against the engines of modern war.

The immediate objective of the battalion attack was the Casino at the near end of the causeway. After two days of small unit action, the battalion in the late afternoon of August 11 took the blasted and tattered Casino. The chateau was less than a thousand yards away, but the intervening space was as exposed as a table top.

Although guns then pounded the chateau for two days, even high velocity shells from 3-inch tank destroyer guns and 8-inch shells from artillery guns and howitzers seemed to have little effect. Neither did air attack by heavy and medium bombers produce any apparent result. German machine gun fire



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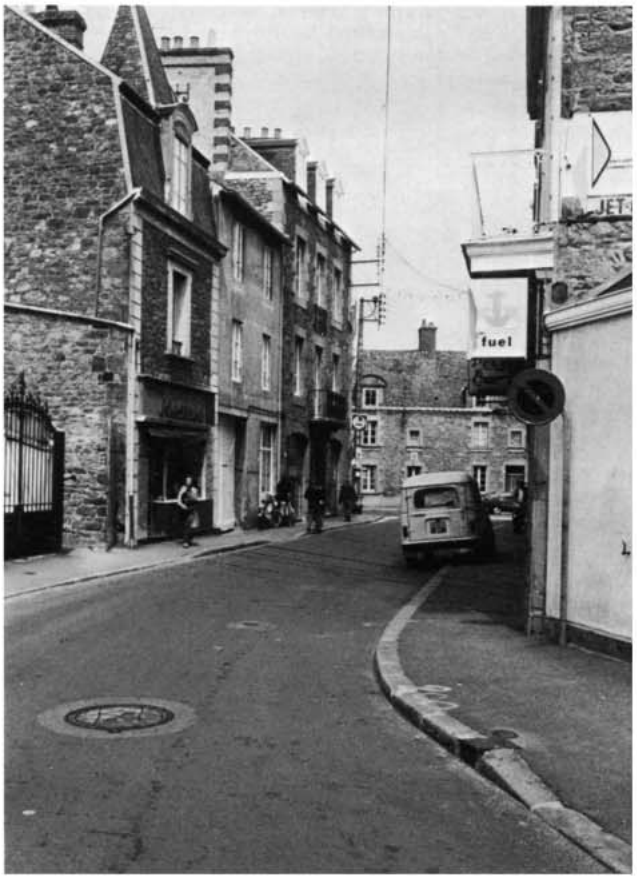


While the attack on Fort de la Varde was taking place, the battle for Parame, a residential suburb of St. Malo bordering the sea took place. Having passed the Eglise de Parame, this patrol from Company I of the 331st Infantry Regiment advance eastward on the Rue de la Gardelle on August 8. At least one GI is firing a .30 calibre Browning machine gun from the hip and there is a profusion of .30 and .45 cartridge cases on the ground. When we took our cover photograph, we expected to see bullet marks on the house at the end of the street in the Rue des Freres but the only trace of the firing was two spang marks on the rendering to the house on the left *(photo below).*

Above: **The following day (August 9), this was the scene recorded on the Place Poincare, only a hundred yards or so along the Rue des Freres (US Army).** *Below:* **The interesting collection of signs has now given way to more mundane directions.**

from the chateau walls remained too devastating for infantry alone to cross the causeway, and minefields prevented tanks from approaching.

As the fighting had progressed, the fires within the St. Malo ramparts had become a raging inferno. Flame and smoke obscured many of the defensive positions. To allow about a thousand French civilians still inside the walls to escape the conflagration, a truce was concluded for several hours during the afternoon of August 13. These and about five hundred hostages and internees, who had been held at a tiny French-built fort offshore, entered American lines. The blaze had no effect on the German garrison in the chateau, for the chateau had its own fireproof walls separating it from the burning town.

With St. Ideuc and la Varde reduced by August 13, the entire 330th Infantry gathered to assault St. Malo on the morning of August 14. As the artillery intensified its shelling and fired smoke and high explosive against the chateau walls, an infantry battalion surged across the causeway, past the chateau and into the walled town. There were few enemy troops in the charred and still burning buildings and these were quickly rounded up. The defenders in the chateau, however, still held out, and their machine guns continued to chatter, discouraging engineers from placing demolition charges against the walls. Despite their virtually impregnable position, the prodding of American artillery fire and the obvious hopelessness of continued resistance finally prompted surrender that afternoon. Prisoners totalled 150,

With this surrender, all organised resistance on the north shore of the St. Malo peninsula came to an end. Next, two small islands, several hundred yards offshore, Fort National and Grand Bey, each comprising several blockhouses, had to be investigated. At low tide on August 16 a rifle company of the 329th Infantry marched across the sand to Fort National and found it unoccupied. The same company then assaulted Grand Bey: 'Went in under a smoke screen, took them by surprise, tossed a few hand grenades, and they gave up.' About 150 Germans surrendered.

All this activity was either preliminary or tangential to the main task — the reduction of the Citadel — which was supported by fire from the island of Cezembre. Although there was no longer any possibility of using the destroyed port of St. Malo, the resistance had to be eliminated to keep the guns of the Citadel and Cezembre garrisons from interfering with Allied shipping to Granville and Cancale. Continued opposition from them would give courage to the small isolated

Above: A 3-inch anti-tank gun fires across the Place de la Fontaine from the Chausee du Sillon. This could possibly have been taken during the advance on the Caserne de Rocabey used as a German barracks (US Army). *Below:* The island in the background is Grand Bey — site of the tomb of Francois Chateaubriand — the celebrated French author who died in July 1848.

Having now reverted to a Gendarmerie, the Caserne de Rocabey stands in the Rue Hippolyte de la Morvonnais. The breach in the outer wall through which Germans surrendered, has now been repaired (US Army).

Above: **Once cleared of the enemy the advance towards the old town and the Citadel can continue. The street at the end of the road is the Rue Roger Vercel (US Army).**

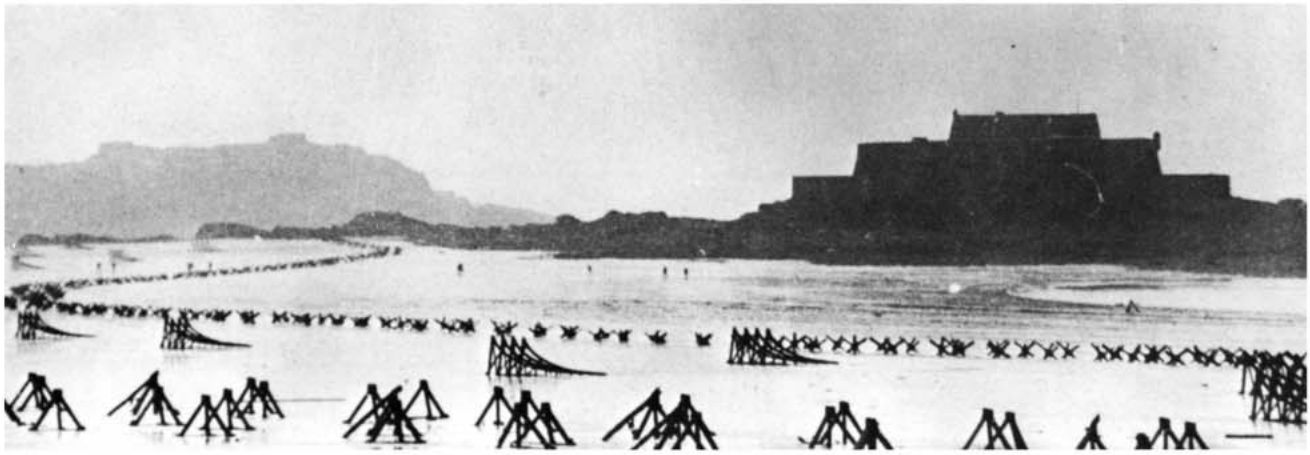
German groups in Brittany that still refused to surrender, while capitulation might have the effect of softening the will to resist at Lorient and Brest. Also, complete reduction of the St. Malo complex would free the 83rd Division for employment elsewhere.

Since reduction of Cezembre required an amphibious landing and naval support, the immediate problem facing General Macon was how to take the Citadel. Dug deeply into the ground, the Citadel was the heart of the fortress complex. The rocky promontory where it was located was a natural defensive position, as indicated by remaining vestiges of fortifications built by the Gauls to protect the long since vanished village of Aleth. A French fort erected there in the mid-eighteenth century provided the foundation for extensive construction undertaken by the Germans in 1942 with Polish, Belgian, Czech, French, Dutch, Algerian and Spanish workers labouring voluntarily or otherwise for Todt.

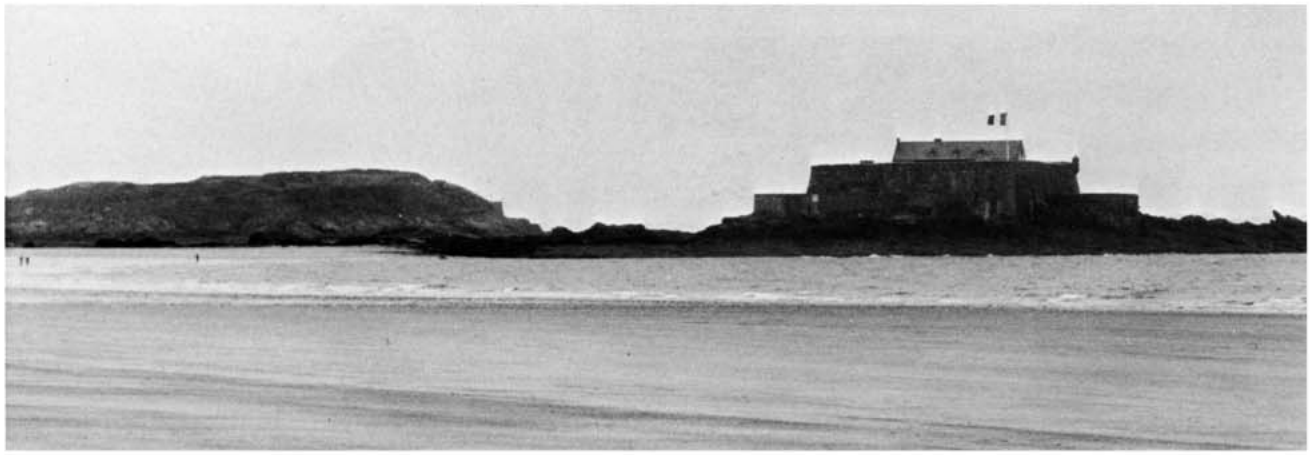
A casemated strongpoint of connected blockhouses, the Citadel was effective against an approach from almost any direction. Where the guns of the Citadel could not fire, pieces at Dinard and Cezembre could. Although the firepower that the fort could deliver was not overwhelmingly impressive — half a dozen field pieces (the largest of 105mm calibre), several mortars, and perhaps eighteen or twenty machine guns comprised the armament — the weapons were mutually supporting. In the event of invaders somehow managing to scale the walls, weapons were fixed to cover the courtyard within.

The walls shielding the defenders were of concrete, stone and steel, so thick that they were virtually impervious to artillery and air bombardment. Inside the fort, ventilation and heating ducts, a vast reservoir of water, a large amount of food and supplies, and a subterranean railway to transport ammunition and heavy equipment helped enable the defenders to withstand siege. Blocking the

Left: **The barracks are now occupied by the French 9 Division d'Infanterie Marine. The only sign of the battle that we could find was this piece of wall** *(right),* **alongside the second car, still with the effect of a burst of machine gun fire visible.**

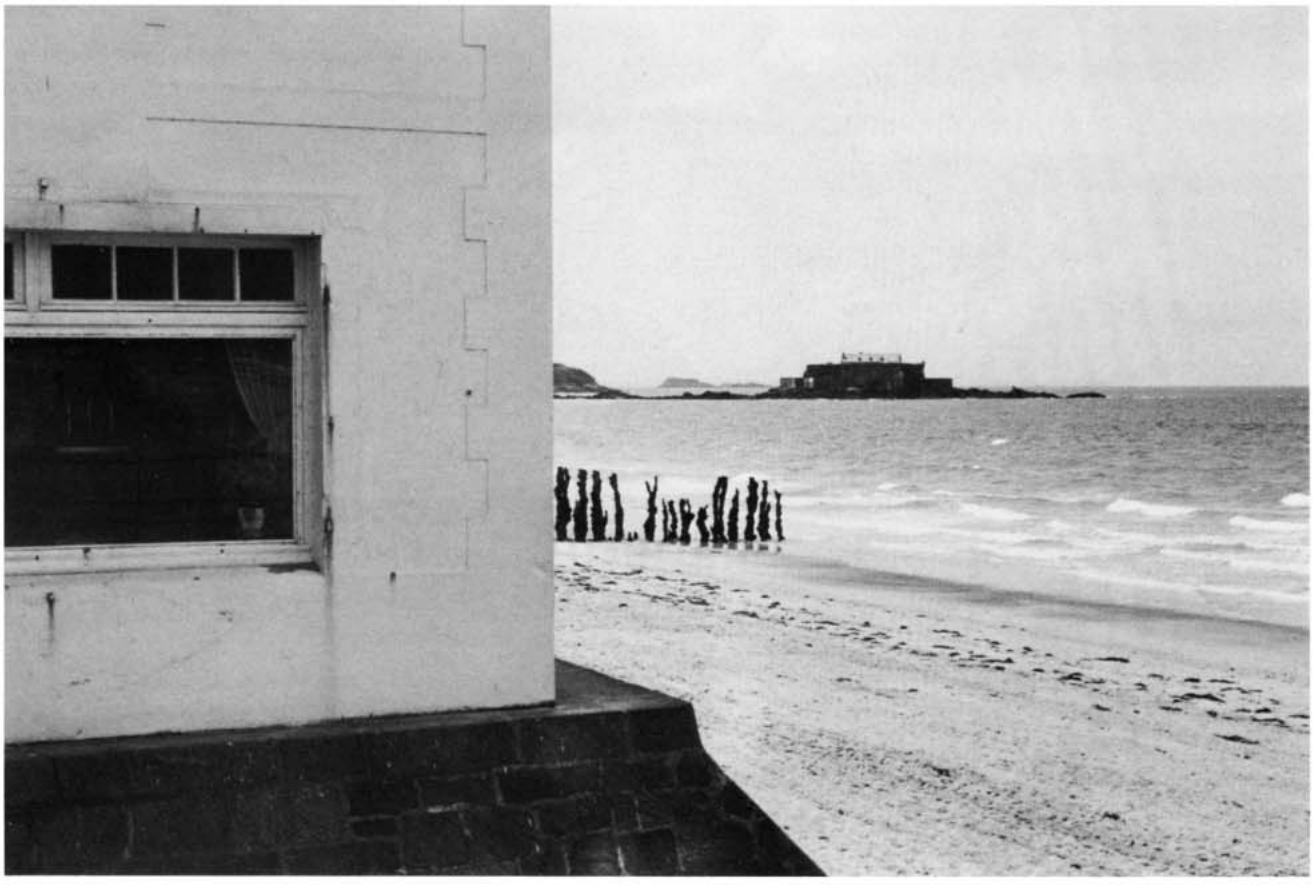


Both the contemporary photographs reproduced on this page are good illustrations of incorrect, original captions. That *above* purports to show 'German troops leaving the fortress at the entrance to St. Malo Harbor'. *Below:* Pfc. Joseph F. Surdy from Scranton, Pennsylvania 'keeps a watchful eye out for any German who may be left behind as the artillery blasts away at the Citadel, the last remaining stronghold in St. Malo.' Both do in fact show Fort National (see map page 5) which lies off Grande Plage on the right of the Americans advancing along the Parame seafront to the old walled city of St. Malo. At low tide the Fort is accessible from the beach and, as the official history states that it was found unoccupied on August 16, the little black dots wading across would more likely be Americans. It is a good example of how mistakes can be made (and have been made in many publications in the past) unless one actually visits the place oneself to check each caption.



Another problem with Signal Corps photographs in their re-issued form is illustrated by SC199778 *above*. The edited caption for the picture now simply reads 'American soldiers fire on the Germans from a captured strongpoint in the streets of St. Malo, France'.

We already know that there were no Germans in Fort National; we discovered that this plate had been exposed on the seafront beside Le Sillon Hotel on the Chausee du Sillon. A slipway has now been cut to the beach where once the GIs stood.



THE CITADEL (FORT DE LA CITE) IN 1981 LOOKING SOUTH-EAST. TOUR SOLIDOR AND RUE DE LA CITE TO ST. SERVAN IN THE BACKGROUND.

One must remember that the St. Malo battle was fought before the German forces in the West had suffered a major defeat — the Falaise Pocket was not closed until August 21. Thus Oberst Andreas von Aulock, deep in his underground headquarters in the Citadel, could still issue such orders as these: 'August 9, 1944. *To all Soldiers of the Garrison.* From this moment there will be only three types of punishment: (1) Whoever leaves the corridors of his billets not clean; whoever does not use the W.C. properly; whoever does not take care of his arms, will receive ten to twenty-five strokes on his behind. (2) Anyone found lacking in interest or showing reluctance in his work, and anyone exhibiting pessimism, will be punished in the following way: The individual will be chased in broad daylight, without weapons, in the direction of the enemy. (3) Disobedience and cowardice will be punished by death.' It is no wonder that the men under his command called him 'the mad colonel of St. Malo'.

These pictures of the Citadel were taken on the afternoon of August 17. A lorry still burns in the courtyard while GIs inspect their prize. The upright rails indicate that the Germans must have feared an Eben-Emael-style glider assault on their fortress.

Above: **Jubilant GIs at their ceremonial flag raising on top of one of the shattered Citadel blockhouses. The overturned gun is a captured British 40mm Bofors — termed in German service the 4cm Fluglabwehrkanone 28 or 4cm Flak for short (US Army).** *Below:* **We were thrilled to find it still in the emplacement in exactly the same position — a very rare event these days as far as movable scrap is concerned.** *Bottom:* **The Editor visited St. Malo with a lifelong schoolfriend Chris Stevens who helped with the production of our very first edition in Normandy. Here he unfurls his brolly for our comparison.**

landward approaches were barbed wire, four lines of steel rails placed vertically in cement, and an anti-tank ditch. Periscopes emerging from the ground level roof of the interior fort provided observation. To improve visibility and fields of fire, the Germans had knocked down several houses in St. Servan, and only the pleading of the mayor had saved a twelfth century church from a similar fate. Personifying the strength of the Citadel was its commander who was determined to bring credit to himself and his forces. According to prisoners, resistance continued 'only because of Oberst von Aulock.'

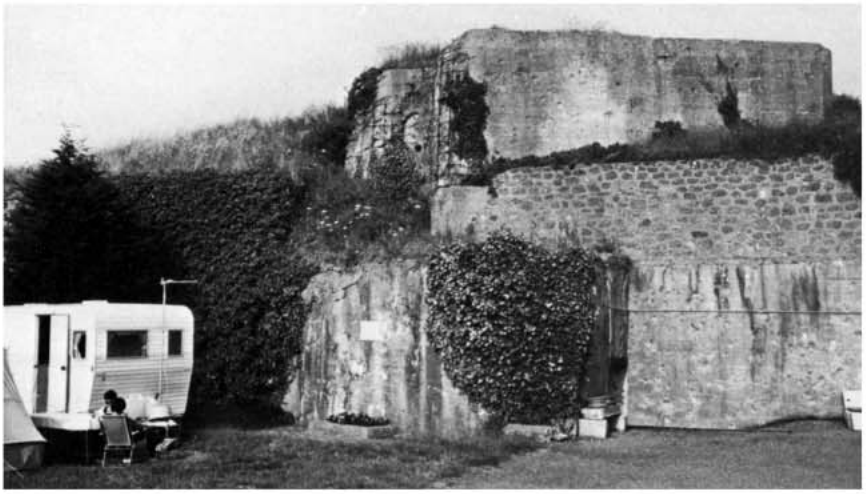
As early as August 5, General Macon was aware that it would be difficult to take the Citadel. When the corps G-3 suggested: 'Why don't you take 155s and blow it off the map?' the division's G-3 answered, 'I don't believe we can.' He was speaking with more truth than he perhaps realised.

The obvious strength of the St. Malo fortress, and particularly of the Citadel, prompted General Middleton to move heavy artillery of the corps into position to support the 83rd Division attack. Before the battle ended, ten artillery battalions, including 8-inch guns, 8-inch howitzers, and 240mm howitzers, were pounding the St. Malo defences. Yet the uncertainty of ammunition hampered operations. Fire plans were often curtailed. No artillery preceded an infantry attack launched on August 9 for example, and on the following day the stockpiles of shells were so low that only five rounds per piece were available. For several days, some of the battalions only fired four rounds per gun per day. Though ammunition shortages were troublesome, the lack of apparent effect against the enemy position was depressing. The walls of the Citadel were too thick to be breached by fire, the enemy pieces too well protected by casemates to be knocked out.

Air attack was similarly ineffective. Fighter-bombers gave excellent assistance when the infantry attacked smaller strongpoints, but they were unable to make an impression on the Citadel. Though two groups of medium bombers attacked the Citadel with 1,000-pound general purpose bombs, these, too, seemed to have no effect. Assured by personal inspection that drastic measures were

1944-1981. Note the clean hole punched through the pole; most probably by a 3-inch shell (US Army).

Above: The entrance to the courtyard has been restored, the whole complex now forming a pleasant camping site. *Below:* Unlike the town itself, the fortification still provides graphic reminders of the American attempts to capture the fort. In spite of so many direct hits, all except one or two shells fired at the cupolas failed to penetrate.



'Here died Buy Gaston Marcel aged 18 killed on August 11 for France whilst participating in the battle'. This plaque records the death of one of the FFI Frenchmen who scaled the walls in one of the attempts to capture the Citadel.

necessary to reduce the Citadel, General Middleton requested a high-level bombardment by heavy bombers in a mass attack. Unfortunately for Middleton, higher headquarters deemed objectives elsewhere of more importance.

Since direct measures to reduce the Citadel seemed to have failed and since an all-out infantry attack would be costly, the 83rd Division turned to subterfuge. A loudspeaker manned by the corps Psychological Warfare Service unit attempted, without success, to persuade the Germans to lay down their arms. Engineers explored the sewage system of St. Malo in the vain hope of discovering at least one conduit close enough to the Citadel to place a decisive demolition charge. A captured German chaplain was permitted to visit the Citadel to ask von Aulock to give up. The chaplain returned with the report that von Aulock refused to surrender because he was 'a German soldier and a German soldier does not surrender.'

The mayor of St. Servan-sur-Mer suggested confidentially that a French lady who knew the Oberst rather well might persuade him to lay down his arms and come out. Contact would not be difficult, he revealed, because a line still connected the Citadel with the St. Servan telephone office. Although the unorthodox nature of this suggestion at first prompted hesitation on the part of US commanders, the lady rang up the Citadel anyway. Though von Aulock would not come to the phone in person, he informed the lady through a subordinate that he had other things on his mind.

Reinforcing von Aulock's indomitable will was information he had received of a major German counter-attack directed through Mortain toward Avranches. If this effort succeeded, it would isolate the Americans besieging St. Malo and eventually make them loosen their grip on the city. He announced the news of the counter-attack to his troops with enthusiasm and promised that the garrison would be rescued, 'if everyone discharges his duty and we hold out just a little longer. . . . Anyone deserting or surrendering', he warned, 'is a common dog!' When he learned that the German counter-attack had stalled, he still clung to his hope of eventual relief, but his declaration to his soldiers then appeared empty. The 83rd Division had by then begun to assault the Citadel.

Having cleared St. Servan and reached the immediate approaches to the Citadel by August 9, the 329th Infantry prepared an attack as a follow-up to an air strike on August 11 that was 'going to bomb hell out of the place'. Medium bombers appeared over the Citadel on the evening of August 11 and dropped 500-pound general purpose bombs,

Debris of war found in the tunnels below the Citadel after the battle. Evidence of SS participation can be seen on one uniform. Today the bunks have rotted and crumbled and officially the interior is closed to visitors (US Army).

Above: **The fight-to-the-last-man Oberst von Aulock, rather surprisingly awarded the oakleaves to his Knights Cross on August 18 — the day after his surrender — leads his men down the Rue de la Cite carrying his belongings. The metre-gauge railway was laid to transport supplies up the hill to the Citadel (US Army).** *Below:* **This was the picture that caused us such a problem to match. The new roads fooled us completely and led us to discount this end of the street. A small piece of old wall still exists — seen above the helmet of the GI in the centre.**

100-pound incendiaries, and 1,000-pound semi-armour-piercing bombs. Immediately after the air attack, a rifle company of the 329th Infantry, reinforced by several engineers and three men of the FFI, moved towards the fort to exploit breaches in the defensive works caused by the bombardment. Using Bangalore torpedoes to open passageways through the barbed wire entanglements and the anti-tank obstacles, the men approached the fort. While a flame-thrower team sprayed a nearby bunker and the company established security positions, about thirty men, including the three Frenchmen, scaled the wall and reached the courtyard. They saw no damage that could have been caused by the air attack, no broken concrete, no flames. Engineers dropped several pole charges through air vents and portholes without apparent effect and set off a few demolition charges without evident result. Suddenly the Germans opened a deadly crossfire with machine guns. Mortar shells began to drop around the walls and artillery shells from Cezembre fell near the fort. Having seen no real breach in the defences, the assault group left the fort and the rifle company withdrew.

Colonel Crabill, the regimental commander who had the immediate responsibility for capture of the Citadel, next decided to form two special assault teams for close-in action against the fort. Each team was to have ninety-six infantrymen augmented by demolition groups, security groups, and a special heavy demolition group. While the teams were formed and rehearsed for action, tank destroyers assumed positions from which to deliver direct fire against the fort in the hope of demolishing enemy gun emplacements.

The tank destroyers, assisted by artillery, pounded the Citadel for two days, and on August 13 medium bombers again struck the fort. Soon after the air bombardment a white flag appeared producing a short-lived jubilation. Von Aulock wanted only to conclude the truce that had permitted the French civilians to depart the burning town of St. Malo.

After the armistice, the artillery and tank destroyer shelling continued. Rounds expended during one 24-hour period totalled 4,103, despite threatened shortages of ammunition. Again on August 15 medium bombers plastered the Citadel for thirty minutes. At the conclusion of the bomb strike, Colonel Crabill's special assault teams launched an attack, but intense machine gun fire soon drove them back.

This picture provides the link with that on the previous page. Taken looking the opposite way towards the Rue des Hauts-Sablons, the rifle of the GI on the left can be seen on the extreme right beside the drain (US Army).

Another picture from the same series showing the four hundred-odd German Citadel defenders marching into captivity (US Army).

Left and above: **Other Germans march down an alternate route from the Place St. Pierre with the one-time prison of Tour Solidor in the background (see aerial shot pages 16-17). Now a new construction spoils the comparison.**

Above left: **All the prisoners were gathered in the Place Bouvet opposite the St. Servan Mairie where Pte. Bill Cooke of Pine Bluff, Arkansas was photographed guarding them with a Browning Automatic Rifle from the bandstand (US Army).** *Above right:* **the bandstand has since been demolished — this is the same angle from the windows of the town hall.**

'Marion's' ghost now reincarnated in the guise of a young French girl's Citroen Dyane. Eglise Ste. Croix in the background.

Above: **Although captioned and released around the world as 'Colonel von Aulock saluting his men just before being driven away to a prisoner-of-war camp after surrendering to US forces', this famous picture by Lawrence Riordan and George Greb shows instead one of von Aulock's staff; the officer can be seen behind the Colonel in the photo on page 23 (US Army).** *Below:* **We established the jeep had stood facing east on the corner of the Rue des Hauts-Sablons.**

Given no apparent alternative but to intensify the siege tactics, General Macon directed that the shelling of the Citadel continue. Two 8-inch guns of the corps artillery came to within 1,500 yards of the fort to deliver direct fire on portholes and vents. Two companies of 4.2-inch mortars that had been firing on the fort intermittently increased the proportion of white phosphorus to high explosive. Air liaison personnel at the 12th Army Group planned a bombing mission employing 'gasoline jell' bombs, not only to eliminate resistance but also to experiment on the effectiveness of what later came to be known as napalm. The climax of these efforts was to be an air attack projected for the afternoon of August 17.

Forty minutes before the scheduled arrival of the planes, a white flag appeared over the Citadel. When several German soldiers emerged from the fort, an American officer went to meet them, though wary that this might be another false alarm. It was not. Von Aulock was indeed ready to surrender. Diverting the bombers to Cezembre, which manifested no sign of imminent capitulation, the 83rd Division began to accept the surrender of the four hundred Citadel defenders who emerged. Among them was von Aulock, freshly-shaved, dress-uniformed, and insolent.

Why had von Aulock surrendered — having sworn to defend to the last man, the last cartridge, the last stone? Men and ammunition remained; the Citadel's supply of food, water and air was abundant; Allied air attacks had hardly been felt inside the walls; the shock of impact from artillery shells had been slight; and the Americans were no closer to the Citadel than they had been eight days before.

As the story unfolded, it became clear that two factors had caused von Aulock to renounce his vows. Firstly, direct hits by 8-inch guns aimed singly and at specific targets at virtual point-blank range had penetrated several firing apertures in the fort and had destroyed a few of the larger artillery pieces and machine gun emplacements. Secondly, American capture of the individual strongpoints of the St. Malo fortress had intensified a psychological malaise deriving from the sensation of being surrounded and trapped. Morale of the troops had deteriorated to the point where further resistance seemed senseless.

Despite his capitulation, von Aulock had done his duty well. He had rendered the port of St. Malo useless to the Americans. He had held up an entire division and substantial supporting forces for almost two weeks and thus had prevented the VIII Corps from taking decisive action against the fortress ports of Lorient and Brest.

The surrender of the Citadel cleared the St. Malo-Dinard sector with the exception of the garrison on the island of Cezembre.

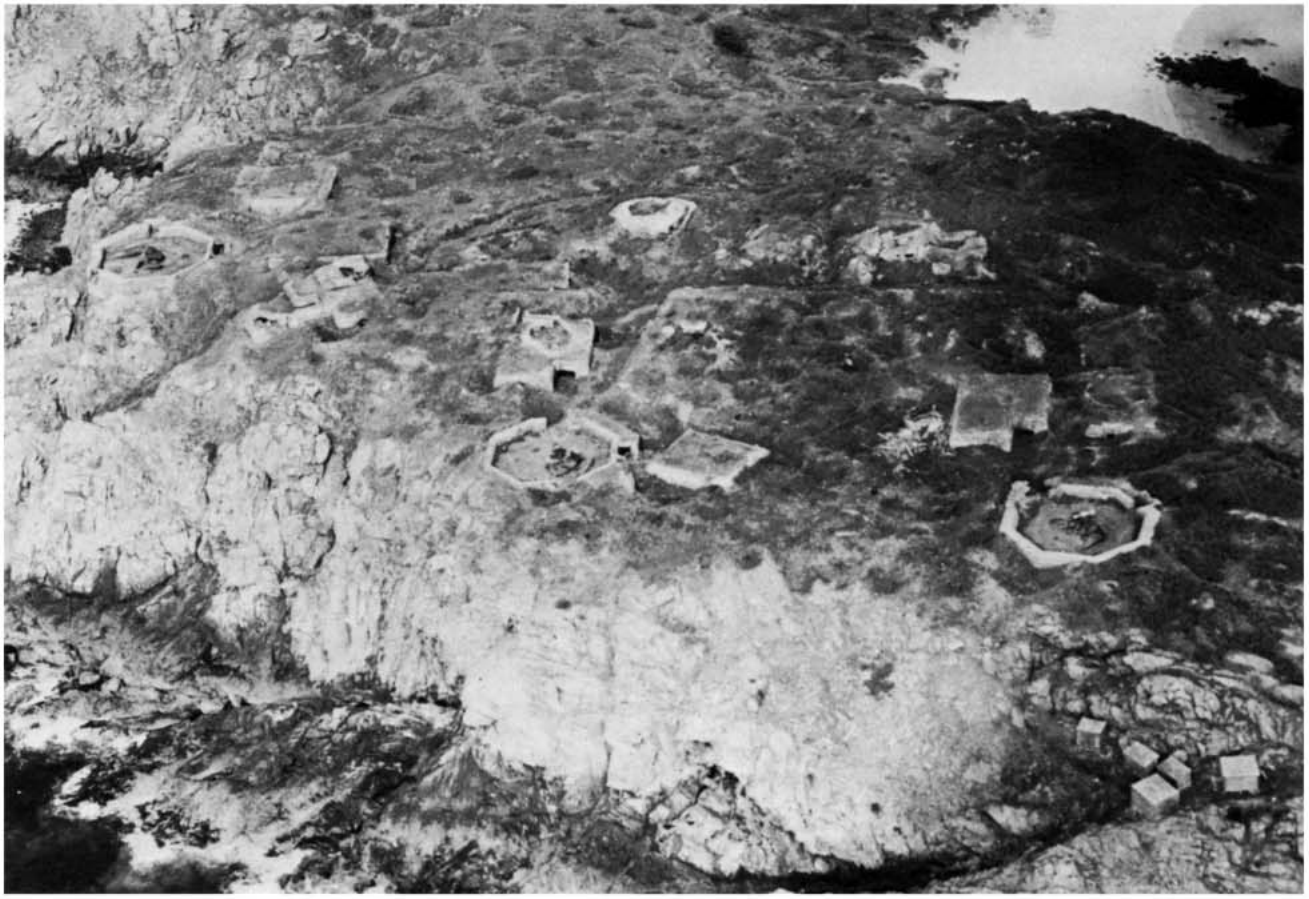
Cezembre

Above: **Lockheed P-38 Lightnings drop napalm (then termed gasoline gell) during the bombardment of Cezembre (US Army).** *Below:* **We determined that the photographer had taken his shot from the corner of Rue du Chateau Gaillard and Rue du Chat qui Danse, just beside the National Merchant Marine School in St. Malo old town.**

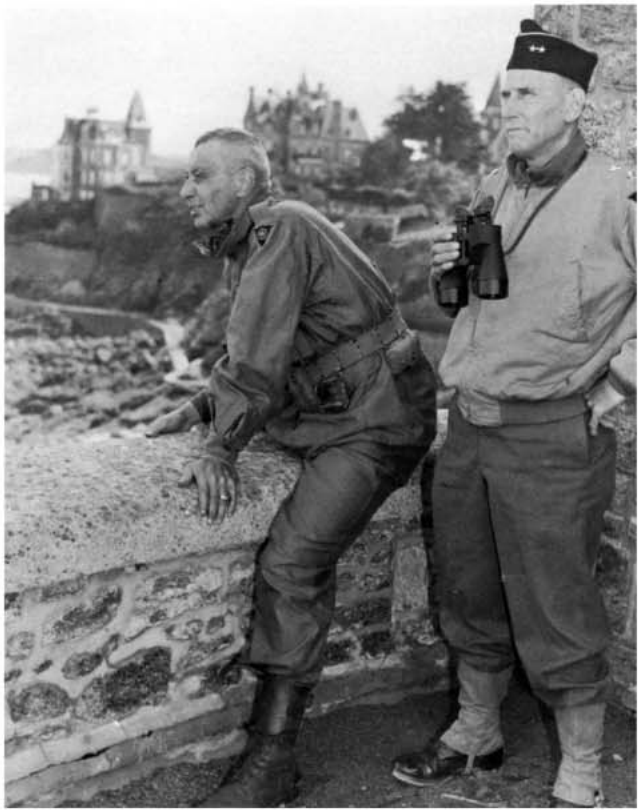
Four thousand yards offshore, the tiny island of Cezembre, half a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide, by its position opposite the mouth of the Rance River defended the sea approach to St. Malo, Granville and Cancale. On the western side of the island, three elderly captured French railway guns of 194mm were emplaced together with a battery of Italian-manned 75mm field guns and a light flak battery whilst there were a further three railway guns and a 150mm weapon facing east. All the emplacements were heavily fortified with light machine guns, minefields and barbed wire which the Wehrmacht had added to convert Cezembre into a mini-fortress with a maximum punch. The defences were manned by a mixed bag of Germans, Italians and Russians.

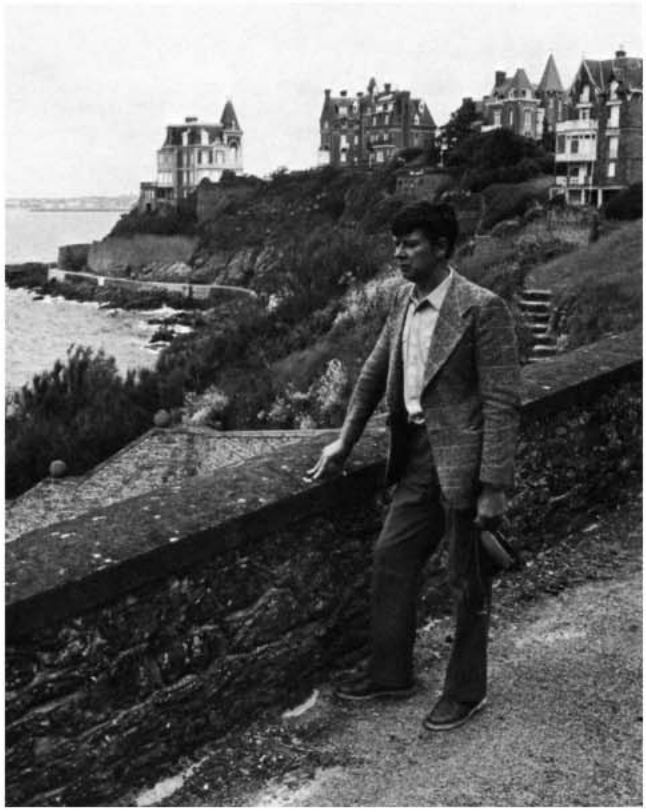
Cezembre's coastal guns had been out of range of the 83rd Division artillery pieces during the early part of the battle and its fire had been a nasty source of harassment. The division had requested the island blasted 'as quickly as we can and as often as we can' and the VIII Corps had promised to 'work on it from the air and naval angle'. Bombers attacked the island during the night of August 6 and again on August 11 although naval gunfire did not become available until much later. Meanwhile, the corps had brought heavy artillery into the St. Malo area and, from August 9 onwards, the pieces shelled the island to prevent interference with the ground action on the mainland.

After the fall of St. Malo, a radio signal was transmitted from Fuehrer HQ direct to the Naval Signals Headquarters at St. Jacques in Guernsey. This ordered the dispatch of vessels to ascertain whether Oberst von Aulock had made good his escape to the comparative safety of Cezembre. Whilst preparations were being made for the journey to the island, a faint radio message was picked up from Cezembre requesting supplies of food, water and ammunition, all of which were running dangerously low. Coupled with this request was another for spares for the RT transmitter and the services of a doctor. Supplies were hastily loaded and two vessels of the 2nd Patrol Boat Flotilla made ready for sea. The vessels, *FK 07* and a former lobster boat were under the command of Oberleutnant Herbert Grohne (Commander of the Harbour Protection Flotilla in Jersey), who had arrived



Cezembre in close up. The German defences were sited in two areas separated by a valley in the centre of the island. *Above:* The battery command post and OP were located on the west end of the island close to the open gun pits. *Below:* Three, similar ex-French 194mm railway guns were emplaced at the eastern end. Aerial shots taken in June 1981.



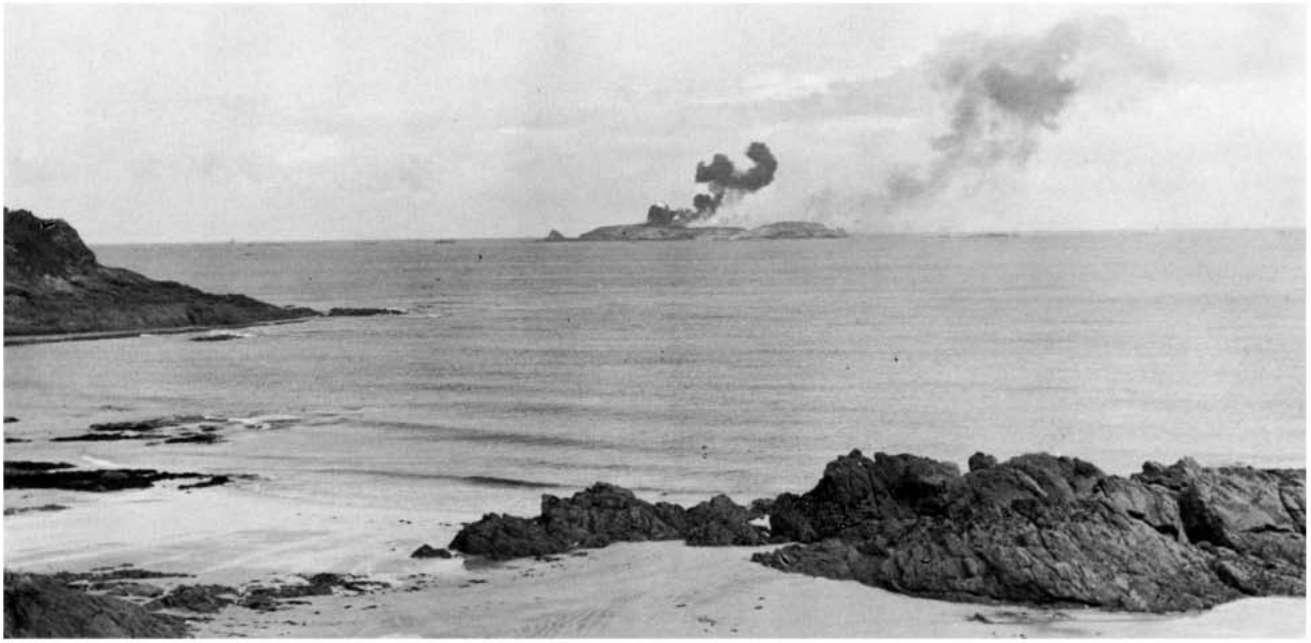


The elusive balcony. Not up to our usual standard, but the best comparison that was possible in the circumstances. Not used to breaking and entering or knocking over old ladies, we had to surreptitiously take our comparison on a garden wall of Greystones. *Above left:* **Picture shows Major General Robert C. Macon, CG of the 83rd Division, and his deputy, Brigadier General Claude B. Ferenbaugh watching the bombardment of Cezembre from Dinard.** *Right:* **Chris Stevens has kittens in 1981 (US Army).**

in Jersey in 1941, thereby making him the longest serving Kriegsmarine officer in the Channel Islands at that date. Under the cover of darkness, the two small ships slipped their moorings and made their way towards Cezembre, the journey taking about four hours. The mission is described in the words of Oberleutnant Grohne:

'We arrived off the north coast of Cezembre under the protective cover of an artillery barrage. As we approached, I ordered the war flag in our stern to be illuminated by our searchlight. We hailed the island and, after some difficulty, managed to contact a Feldwebel. This having been done, we arranged to come closer inshore with my vessel and I ordered that the other vessel should remain

Above: **The caption to this picture on the same balcony states that it was taken during the planning of the amphibious assault on Cezembre on August 31. Lieutenant Colonel D. D. Sherman of the US Marine Corps has joined the group (US Army).** *Below:* **The island erupts under the intense bombing and shelling on the same day (US Army).**



unseen offshore. As we came in close to the landing area I left the vessel in the charge of a Steurmansmaat with the instructions that under no circumstances was the vessel to come any closer in towards the landing area on account of the vessel running aground when the tide dropped. Guided by the Feldwebel, I and some of my men made our way to the command bunker. Here we were met by the acting Kommandant of Cezembre, Oberleutnant Richard Seuss, a man who had already distinguished himself in the fighting around St. Malo for which he had been awarded the Knights Cross with Oak Leaves. After the faulty RT set had been repaired, and a better contact established with Guernsey, arrangements were then put in hand to unload the stores from the two ships and to load a number of wounded men for transport back to hospital in Jersey.

'It was at that stage that the Steurmansmaat entered the bunker with the disconcerting news that the boat was hard aground! At this I ordered the other boat, waiting offshore, to return to Jersey at once, and I and my crew settled down to await the arrival of other vessels the next night. Needless to say the conditions on the island were far from pleasant but we were at the time comparatively safe in the depths of the command bunker even though the American shelling was rolling over the island in waves. In daylight the next morning we made our way down to our vessel which had run aground and found that she could be refloated so I decided to get under way for St. Helier at once. We were about one hundred metres offshore when we were observed from St. Malo and the Americans at once started shelling us, scoring a direct hit on the fore section of the ship which sank almost immediately. Those of us who survived had to swim for our lives to the shore and the cover of a bunker.

'About an hour after the sinking of the boat, our lookouts reported that a boat carrying a flag of truce was approaching from St. Malo. On landing, the American officer was taken to Oberleutnant Seuss, who was asked if he wanted to surrender the island to the American forces. Oberleutnant Seuss replied that, "A German officer never surrenders" at which the Americans left. Shortly after this the shelling was resumed more fiercely than before and, the same night at about 2200 hours, we received a bombing raid from the US Air Force. Early next morning a leaflet raid took place, the leaflets exhorting the garrison to surrender to prevent further bloodshed but these were ignored by the men

Above: **The view from the sea shore behind St. Malo as yet another wave of aircraft bomb the island (US Army).** *Below:* **Today Cezembre lies peaceful and is a sanctuary for thousands of seagulls.**

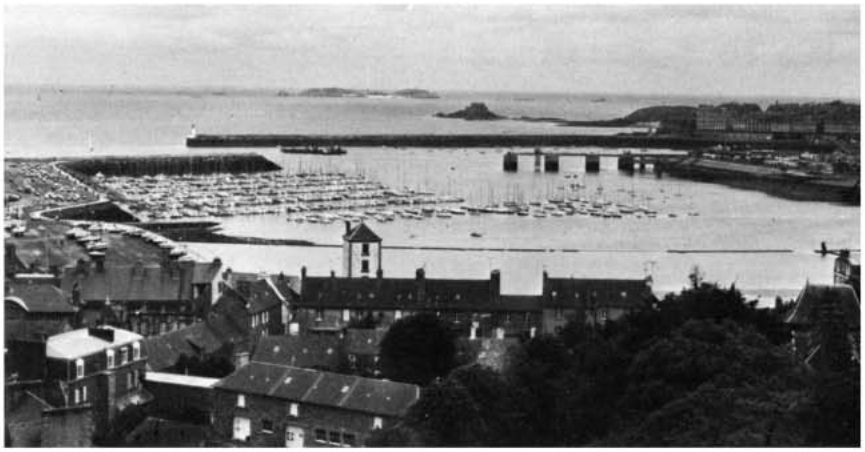
Left: **L-R: Pfc. Stanley Zmirski, Pte. Jack Hoppe, Pfc. Marlle (sic) Brown and Sergeant James McCutcheon in the operations room of an American shore battery observe shellfire directed at Cezembre (US Army).** *Right:* **We established that the ops room was located in this chateau on the Pointe de la Vicomte at Dinard and is in fact the one seen in the background on the left of the picture at the top of page 31. Unfortunately it was shuttered and barred when we called.**

who grimly decided to carry on the fight. We had hoped that a boat from Jersey would arrive that night but we had to stay on that battered island for yet another night before we ourselves were able to get away.'

The thirty-five aircraft diverted to Cezembre from the attack on the Citadel on August 17 had created huge columns of smoke with their napalm bombs. Hoping that fires started by the bombardment would intensify the adverse effect that von Aulock's capitulation was sure to have on the garrison, and expecting that both factors would bring about a readiness to surrender, General Macon had authorised Major Joseph M. Alexander and two enlisted men, as well as an accredited civilian motion picture cameraman, to demand that the Germans relinquish the island. On August 18 the party rowed across the St. Malo bay, this being the American referred to in Oberleutnant Grohne's account. Major Alexander reported that, neither arrogant nor boastful, the German commander stated that the last order he had received from higher headquarters instructed him to maintain his defence. Until he received a countermanding order, he would continue to do just that. Informed that the mainland was completely under American control, he declared that he did not understand how that changed his situation. Reminded that von Aulock had surrendered the day before, he countered that he had not exhausted his ammunition on Cezembre.

According to Alexander's observations, Cezembre was a shambles. Shelling and bombardment had demolished or badly damaged the few houses and buildings, destroyed a narrow-gauge railway designed to carry ammunition from the beach to gun positions, created large craters, and exploded an ammunition dump, scattering shells and debris throughout the island. About three hundred men comprised the garrison and, from tunnels dug into rock, the men manned those coastal guns that still functioned.

Meanwhile, back in the German Naval HQ in Guernsey, efforts were being made to mount a relief operation for the garrison. Sea and tide charts were consulted, along with survey charts previously made by the Naval Artillery. About the same time an urgent signal was received from Cezembre, requesting further supplies of 194mm and 150mm shells to be dispatched as soon as possible as the supply situation was now desperately low. Urgent RT messages were sent to Admiral Rieve, the Senior Naval Officer (Commanding Admiral of the Channel Coast and Northern France) and also to the Artillery Weapons Department of the Kriegsmarine. However, they were only able to pass on the bad news that 194mm shells were just not available for, in the whole of German-occupied France, there was only one other battery of 194mm guns and these were cut off by the Allied advance. The same applied to the 150mm ammunition for the former ship's gun of World War I vintage. Therefore, all that could be supplied for this weapon was standard 150mm ammunition from the supplies held at Noirmont in Jersey for the guns of Batterie Lothringen and this was successfully transported to Cezembre by a vessel of the 24th Minesweeping Flotilla. On the



Above: **The bombardment as seen from the spire above the dome of the Eglise Ste. Croix (see page 25). The destroyed Mole des Noires can be seen in the middle distance (US Army).** *Below:* **Transformation due to the huge post-war interest in boats and yachting and the construction of the Port de Plaisance marina.**

The command bunker on the island where Major Joseph Alexander met Oberleutnant Richard Seuss to discuss a surrender.

return journey the vessel brought back to Jersey wounded men and twenty-two Italian members of the garrison. With almost nightly visits to the island by small vessels from the Channel Islands, the now battle-weary men of the Cezembre garrison were assured of one thing: they had not been forgotten and whatever could be done for them by the forces in the Channel Islands would certainly be carried out.

For Oberleutnant Seuss, the situation grew worse each hour of every day. His senior officer, Leutnant Eckert, lay severely wounded and the language difficulties caused by having both Italian and Russian troops under his command made liaison difficult under the almost incessant bombardment. The 190mm batteries were low on ammunition and had lost three of their six guns. The water supply was almost exhausted and the damaged bunkers were full of wounded men — even the empty ammunition bunkers were now being used as first aid posts. Three deserters from the Italian garrison made the crossing over the shallows to St. Malo where they described the conditions on the island in no uncertain terms.

It is assumed that this induced the Americans on August 28 to try once again to obtain the surrender of the island by the use of another leaflet raid, the leaflets telling the men of their hopeless position. However, the garrison felt that they had been betrayed by the Italians and therefore they must hold out in the bunkers for as long as it was humanly possible. Oberleutnant Seuss, an able tactician, realised that so long as the 20mm and 75mm guns could be kept firing it was most unlikely that the Americans would attempt an attack across the shallows. To this end, Seuss and the remaining unwounded men strove to keep the guns firing, sending the occasional salvo at the Americans in and around St. Malo.

Cezembre is a unique uncleared battlefield and probably no other piece of ground received such a huge concentration of bombing and shelling, using high explosive, phosphorous and napalm, during the Second World War.

Above: **Although the observation post faced seaward, the guns were on revolving carriages in open emplacements. Thus the Germans could still bring these to bear on targets ashore and the one *below* does still face towards St. Malo.**

Over on the French mainland, while the Americans were preparing to launch a strong attack against Brest, higher headquarters decided to eliminate the nuisance of Cezembre. The 330th Infantry headquarters returned to St. Malo to direct training for an amphibious operation and arrangements were made for assault boats and special equipment. Softening up operations commenced on August 30 when two waves of aircraft bombed the island. On August 31 twenty-four P-38s dropped napalm and three hundred heavy bombers struck with high explosive. Several 8-inch howitzers and guns shelled the island 'day and night' particularly in an effort to destroy water tanks. Another parley with Oberleutnant Seuss disclosed 'that he will fight to the last drop of water'.

It is possibly true to say that up to this time the bombs and shells, although causing much damage and many casualties, were insufficient to bring Cezembre and its defenders to the point of surrender. The actual surrender was brought about by two things. Firstly a two-and-a-half-hour bombardment by HMS *Warspite* which fired salvo after salvo of huge armour-piercing shells at the bunkers, reducing them to ruin and, secondly, the terrible barrage of napalm bombs and white phosphorus shells, coupled with aircraft rocket strikes. French and American eye witnesses to the barrage said that it rolled back and forth across the island, and it was thought that no one could have possibly survived as all those who were not blown to shreds would almost certainly have been asphyxiated.

By now a further ninety-nine men had been wounded, bringing the total of wounded still on the island to 277, including seventy from the Italian garrison and twenty-five Russians. Urgent signals were sent to Naval HQ, calling for medical help and, on receipt, Admiral Hueffmeier, the German C-in-C in the Channel Islands, ordered the German hospital ship, the *Bordeaux*, to the island although he must have realised that it was almost certain that the vessel would be captured by Allied naval forces operating in the area. This was a chance that the German Naval Command had to take. The *Bordeaux* left St. Helier, accompanied by a barge, in the late afternoon of September 1 and proceeded towards Cezembre near where both she and the barge were captured by Allied forces and taken to Portland.

Meanwhile, the Allies increased their pressure. On September 1 medium bombers of both the US Ninth Air Force and RAF Bomber Command opened an aerial assault that ended with thirty-three P-38s dropping napalm. HMS *Warspite* fired salvos of 15-inch armour-piercing projectiles. Field artillery from the mainland fired 155mm, 8-inch, and 240mm shells at embrasures, portholes, and tunnel entrances. After this display of power, another demand for surrender was transmitted to the garrison but again the German commander replied that he lacked permission to surrender.

By this time Oberleutnant Seuss must have realised that nothing further could be gained by prolonging the agony of his men as he formally requested his Naval HQ for leave to surrender to the Americans. However, Admiral Hueffmeier radioed back, 'Hold hard, Grohne near you', meaning that the small vessels from Jersey were once more on

The only danger from bombing today comes from the countless sea birds wheeling and diving over the heads of visitors. Many of the young were still in their nests when we were on the island which increased the screeches of protest as we clambered over the cratered landscape.

Above: **After the surrender, German prisoners line up on the beach to be shipped to the mainland.** *Below:* **Pfcs. David Snyder and Richard Franz triumphantly replace the white flag (on the building on the left) with Old Glory. From the bulge under his jacket, it looks as if Dave has appropriated the surrender flag as a souvenir. It would be interesting to know if he still has it today!**

their way to the island to take off as many men as possible. Oberleutnant Seuss replied 'Mit der Faust in der Hand kampfen, Ja; in zerstoerbarend Bunkern zu verbluten, Nein!' (The men would rather fight with bare fists than sit in the ruined bunkers and bleed to death!) The flotilla set out from Jersey, but fate, in the guise of bad weather, caused the ships to turn back, so ending what was to be the last mission to Cezembre. Thereupon Oberleutnant Seuss ordered the destruction of the code books, charts and RT after a last message had been sent to Naval HQ. The final signal from Admiral Hueffmeier wished the garrison good luck and authorised the surrender of the island. Oberleutnant Grohne, aboard the returning flotilla, also received a message from Naval HQ, in which Admiral Hueffmeier said, 'Thanks Grohne, I have told the Befehlshaber that Oberleutnant Seuss is prepared to surrender.'

At 7.30 p.m. the following day (September 2), just as the 330th Infantry were preparing to make an amphibious assault on Cezembre, the garrison raised a white flag. The landing craft immediately conducted troops to the island and evacuated one German officer, 320 ORs (including twelve Red Cross women who had done all that was possible for the hundreds of wounded during the final ordeal), and two Italian officers, the actual surrender being signed at midday. Although the fortifications had been severely damaged and all the heavy guns put out of action, the reason for the capitulation was a shortage of water — the distillation plant having been destroyed.

So ended the battle of St. Malo, a battle that had been unexpected in its inception, in its difficulty, and in its duration. German troops, although isolated, had demonstrated convincingly the value of military discipline in carrying out the Fuehrer's will. An action of local significance by mid-August and a backwater operation more than a hundred miles behind the front, the defence of the town and the destruction of the port had, nevertheless, fulfilled an important part of Hitler's strategic design.

A town is reborn . . .

Above: **Porte St. Vincent leading into the old town, devastated in five days in August 1944 (US Army).** *Below:* **The rebuilding from 1948-1960 was a world renowned feat of reconstruction.**

The Chateau de la Duchesse Anne was the main German defensive position in the old town. Dominated by the Grand Donjon (Great Keep) forty metres high, originally a French national prison, it was in an ideal position to cover the open causeway leading to the Casino and Parame. Today, beautifully restored, it houses the St. Malo Museum and Hotel de Ville.

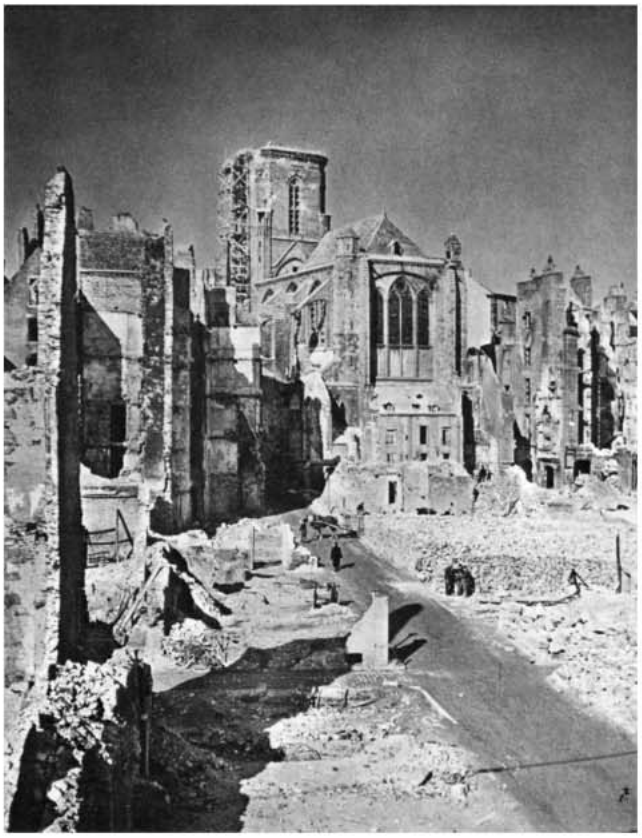
My first visit to St. Malo took place as a schoolboy around 1950. My recollections of the brief visit are vague although I can still remember that sunken ships were still being raised from the port and that ruined buildings and bomb sites were prolific. Having long wanted to return, our St. Malo story has been in the pipeline for some time but it was only in June 1981 that a visit became possible. One of the reasons for the delay, as with so many After the Battle stories, is the search for wartime photographs suitable for comparison and, as the capture of St. Malo fell within the American zone of operations, it is to the Washington archives to which one must turn.

According to the official US Signal Corps history, by the end of 1943 the thirty civilians in the Still Picture Library of the Army Photographic Service were hard pressed to keep up with the job of indexing, filing and cross-referencing the thousands of pictures reaching the Pentagon. As a result of the shortage of personnel, the officer in charge stated that in his opinion a large number of the photos received should never have been taken and, if they were taken, should never have been submitted to Washington'.

As a result, the APS began rejecting those pictures it considered to be of no value for the War Department permanent files. From among the hundreds of thousands of pictures received, the Still Picture Library culled only the best which satisfied its criteria for strategic, tactical, training, intelligence, information or historical material. As a result only some 10,000 pictures per month were retained, the total library on WWII photography running to half a million photographs of which a third had been received during the last year of the war.

The Signal Corps history also comments that: 'For approximately the first half of the war period, there persisted considerable dissatisfaction with the manner in which combat photography was being handled. Photographic companies attached to field armies were furnishing thousands of feet of combat film and thousands of still pictures for a great variety of purposes. Cameramen all over the world were risking and sometimes losing their lives, yet the product of their labors brought little but criticism. In Washington, officials complained that combat pictures lacked reality and spectacular appeal; overseas, commanders objected that the combat photos did not do justice to the gallant deeds of the foot soldiers. The Signal Corps felt that commanders did not understand the photographic mission and therefore did not give their cameramen an opportunity to secure satisfactory combat footage. Many a commander was reluctant to have photographers at the front simply because, not understanding or appreciating what they could do for him, he did not want to be bothered. Furthermore, even in those instances in which the photographers were given an opportunity to record continuous battle action, it often proved disappointing. The truth was that the stark

The 16th century Grand Porte faces the Quai St. Vincent. Although the massive gateway withstood the bombardment, the houses of the Grand Rue did not. The statue of Notre-Dame-de-Bon-Secours survived and can be seen above the gateway.



The Editor is indebted to Michel Briand of St. Malo Mairie for making available to us his archive copy of the publication on the rebuilding of St. Malo for us to copy. All the comparison photographs were taken in 1960 by Rene Jacques but have since been lost. This is the Grand Rue leading to the Cathedral.

actuality of the battle front was seldom photogenic. Except for landings, the Chief Signal Officer pointed out, "the most striking feature of the battlefield is its emptiness."

'Assignment of mission, probably the most important phase of military planning, was quite as necessary for photographic troops as for any other unit. But all too frequently, commanders failed to assign specific objectives, support, or zones of responsibility to the photographic officer. Division commanders who would not dream of telling their regimental commanders merely to "move forward" saw no impropriety in simply ordering the photographic officer to "cover the operation". A photographic officer had to be both tactful and tenacious to find out what his objective really was.'

The majority of Signal Corps photographs were taken on Speed Graphic press plate

The Cathedral was begun in the 12th century. This is the view along Rue St. Vincent, named after a Spanish deacon.

Important features of the former buildings were preserved and incorporated into the new constructions. *Above:* **Place Chateaubriand,** *below* **Rue St. Philippe.**

cameras (in US Army nomenclature, the PH-47) giving a clarity unsurpassed by British or German war photographers who largely worked with 2¼ square or miniature cameras although the Signal Corps also used some Leicas (AN/GFQ-1) and Rolliflexes (AN/PFH-1).

Since 1945, the American photographic archives have seen considerable reorganisation and many hundreds if not thousands of photographs have been scrapped along the way. As late as July 1979, pictures and negatives were still being destroyed in the Army Audiovisual Unit — in this case all photos in the 'Personality' files of men who were not general officers. Later that year, a new organisation was created by the Deputy Secretary of Defense to eliminate duplication of audiovisual material. The new body — the Defense Audiovisual Agency (DAVA) now performs the production, acquisition and reproduction of all motion picture films, video and audio tapes and discs, still photographs, multimedia' (whatever that word means) 'and other audiovisual media.'

The index cards for all US Army photographs are now filed under 'SC' numbers (denoting Signal Corps) rather than the old ETO wartime sequential numbering system prefixed by EA (for European Army). Also the original captions, although in many cases censored, ambiguous and even incorrect (viz the 'von Aulock' Jeep picture), have now been reduced to a brief sentence. Thus, when one searches today for suitable pictures for comparison, not only are the problems of the task compounded by the loss of sequence, and identification more difficult because of the deletion of caption information, but the choice is sometimes painfully small.

One photograph, in our opinion, did stand out of the St. Malo series as illustrative of a superb, rare combat shot and this has been featured on the cover of this issue. Before reaching France, we had feared it might be a location either redeveloped, providing a poor comparison, or one of those just impossible to find in the huge sprawl of modern-day St. Malo. The caption merely stated 'house-to-house fighting in St. Malo', although it did identify the unit as Company I of the 331st Regiment on August 8. The photo had the new 'SC' number of 192697 and another photograph in the same sequence, taken just seconds later, SC 192526 — a good illustration of the crazy numbering of the new system which gives no clue as to the relationship between various pictures which would have shown up on the old 'EA' numbering method.

Built from 1709 to 1715, by Chevalier de Garangeau, the buildings opposite the Porte de Ville were faithfully reconstructed following the original design.

Our first port of call when we arrived in St. Malo was the Mairie or Town Hall and we soon had an enthusiastic gathering of the personnel in the architect's department, all talking at once, trying to identify our photographic locations. As the crosses marked on our town plan multiplied, it became obvious that photography of the battle had centred on Parame (a suburb of St. Malo) and the Citadel. SC 192697 was pinpointed as being taken in the Rue de la Gardelle, a really incredible piece of identification by one member of the staff.

With ninety per cent of the locations established, we set out, on foot at first, to explore the city. Study of the map and aerial

photograph should enable readers not familiar with St. Malo to comprehend the lay-out. St. Servan and Parame are suburbs, while the old walled town of St. Malo and the Citadel (Fort de la Cite to the French) stand on two promontories, to the north and south respectively, of the port and dock area.

We first walked to the Citadel following the precise route in reverse of von Aulock when he surrendered. In the narrow Rue de la Cite we made our first important discovery: the photograph of the German officer in the Jeep, captioned as 'von Aulock saluting his men' (revealed as being taken on the corner of the Rue des Hauts-Sablons) was not of von Aulock at all as this officer was visible behind von Aulock in another shot which clearly showed the Colonel striding down the road. This picture took a long time to pinpoint. We knew it must have been taken somewhere between the Citadel and the 'Jeep' photo — a distance of perhaps 700-800 yards. Only the last 400 yards are built up so this narrowed the area but, although we walked up and down the road several times, nothing matched exactly. It was tempting to try to 'make something fit', by convincing oneself that a window had been altered or that a doorway had been blocked up, but even then the road appeared definitely to be bending to the left in the background. It was only by making house-to-house enquiries that we established the position — and the fact that the new road cutting in on the right was a post-war alteration which had previously led us to discount this lower end of the street. Everything then fell into place. The bayonet of the chap with the Garand on the left of the picture can just be seen poking out on the right of another photo — so linking the two pictures and confirming the location.

At the Citadel itself, we were thrilled to discover that the 40mm Bofors, around which the triumphant GIs had grouped for their victory photo, was still in situ — exactly in the position it was in 1945. The gun must have been one captured by the Germans in 1940 and much of the metalwork and the 'Sechs-schartenturm' — the six-loopholed cupolas — are dated 1939, having most probably been originally made for the Siegfried Line. These steel cupolas are dramatic reminders of the incredible firepower brought to bear on St. Malo as each is pock-marked with shell-fire (of 2 to 3-inch calibre) with some shells still embedded in the steel. Penetration seems to have been about six inches for a shot hitting at ninety degrees (which still failed to penetrate) although shells hitting at an acute angle merely bounced off.

The compound of the Citadel is now a camping site and it was rather sad to see a French family intent on watching a frivolous TV programme within a few feet of a case-mate, seemingly oblivious that the plaque mounted on its bullet-scarred wall recorded the death of one of their countrymen on that precise spot.

We had been told that the underground part of the fortress was now closed although it was not clear whether this meant that there had been a permanent sealing of the tunnels or not. As one particular door into a casemate looked a possibility, in the company of Michael Ginns, secretary of the Jersey branch of the Channel Islands Occupation Society who was in St. Malo on a day trip, we ventured inside.

After successfully negotiating the usual rubbish and excreta to be found in most bunkers today, we came to a steep flight of steps leading down to the stygian depths below. The roof of the shaft was of natural rock and Michael cheered us up with an admonition not to touch any protruding pieces of wood as these sometimes concealed unfired construction charges! The flight of steps ended after some hundred feet or so and the tunnel emerged into a larger one crossing at right-angles, still with a 60cm-gauge railway track embedded in its floor. Except for the sounds of dripping water the silence was profound — it was certainly not a place to venture alone. Well aware of the dangers of getting lost, we were careful at first to keep to the main passage, but the temptation to look in the side chambers and branch tunnels became too great. As one would have expected, the inner branches contained accommodation, confirmed by mouldering wooden bunks which crumbled to the touch. The exterior shafts leading to the casemates were more rewarding. Although the embrasures have been bricked up, several guns remain inside just as they were left at the end of the battle — the first we found being a wheeled 75mm PAK 40 anti-tank. It had either received a direct hit or a shell had exploded in the breech. Also the solid tyres had all been cut back to the rims — Michael explaining that as shoe leather was in short supply, German troops often used strips of tyre rubber to sole their boots! A six-round shell case nearby, although rusted, provided a fine trophy.

The passages seemed to stretch for miles, the darkness and silence extending their depths. As we had already spent longer than planned, and Michael was anxious to return to his party as he was holding the tickets for a planned trip that afternoon to Cezembre, reluctantly we retraced our steps with much still unexplored. Reaching the top of the stairs, Michael nearly had a fit when we reached the steel entrance door. We had left it open. Now it was firmly closed by unknown hands. The realisation that we should have left someone at the entrance was cold comfort now, and the mind soon magnifies the possible outcome of our foolishness. The armoured door withstood all efforts to budge it by shoulder charges and it was impossible to see if it was locked. With time running out for the departure for Cezembre, the thought of

Eighty per cent of all the buildings had been affected by the bombardment. Using the traditional materials of granite and slate, the shattered town was slowly returned to its former glory and even improved with the addition of more open spaces.

Facing the site of the ancient town of Aleth, the Mole des Noires constructed in 1842 had been rebuilt by 1952.

about thirty people waiting at the quayside wondering where Michael had got to, goaded the normally passive Jerseyman into a frenzy. Seizing a huge baulk of timber, he lunged at the door with all his force . . . his war cry unprintable. Like a ridiculous Keystone Cops film, the door sprang open and we all tumbled outside to land amongst rotting household refuse and old kitchen utensils. Within minutes our sheepish grins had turned into bravado and laughter, yet a lesson had been learned, which we hope others will profit by.

The old town of St. Malo, terribly devastated during the battle, has now been completely restored. Within four weeks of the end of the battle, the St. Malo Administration des Ponts et Chaussees began the job of pulling down and clearing half a million cubic metres of stone ruins which were a danger to life. This job alone took two years using only the rudimentary methods then available. Certain facades which were classed as historic monuments had to be shored up and preserved to enable M. Raymond Cornon, the Architect-in-Chief for Historic Monuments, to reconstruct the buildings later on. While the clearance work was taking place, M. Brillaud de Laujardiere was given the task of making a study for a new urbanisation plan. Using this as a basis, M. Louis Arretche was nominated the chief architect for the reconstruction of St. Malo on May 14, 1947. In October that year, conscious of the immense job which faced the city, the people of St. Malo gave their Mayor, M. Guy La Chambre, a huge vote of confidence.

Thus the immense task of rebuilding the old town began. On February 9, 1948, M. La Chambre inaugurated the Association Syndicale de Reconstruction de Saint-Malo which immediately received the co-operation of all parties enabling the first phase to begin quickly in an operation which was possibly without equal in post-war France. In all, the Association had to deal with about 600 separate landlords and persuade them to accept the overall plan.

The new layout followed the basic outlines of the old city although the opportunity was taken to open up certain areas. Within three months a start had been made on the first four buildings out of the 2,000 which had been destroyed. At the end of July 1951 — three years later — 180,000 square metres of buildings were in the course of construction and the St. Malouins held a fete to celebrate the resurrection of their town. By 1954 some ninety per cent of St. Malo had been reconstructed and repairs to the port were well under way, the lock to the Bassin Vauban having been opened in 1950, and the mole rebuilt by 1952.

The massive rebuilding task was completed by 1960 when a special publication was produced by the Hotel de Ville to record twelve years of remarkable effort. Today, except for an occasional bullet mark on an odd block of original stone, there is nothing to remind the visitor of the devastation caused by the fanatical German defence. Perhaps it would have been in keeping to have retained just one ruin as a memorial although one graphic reminder can still be seen not far away.

Cezembre, the island lying about three miles off St. Malo, is, in our experience, unique. Not only can the island still be seen, blasted and cratered from the several heavy bombing raids, but the twisted guns still lie in and outside their pits where they were blown and left in 1944. It is an uncleared battlefield of the first order and one which any of our readers will find of exceptional interest. The journey from St. Malo by vedette (a medium-sized launch) takes about half an hour but one should plan to go on an early boat and leave the return until as late as possible. We only allowed a visit of two hours which was far too short to study every aspect in detail. The vedettes operate from May to September, the return fare costing 25 francs.

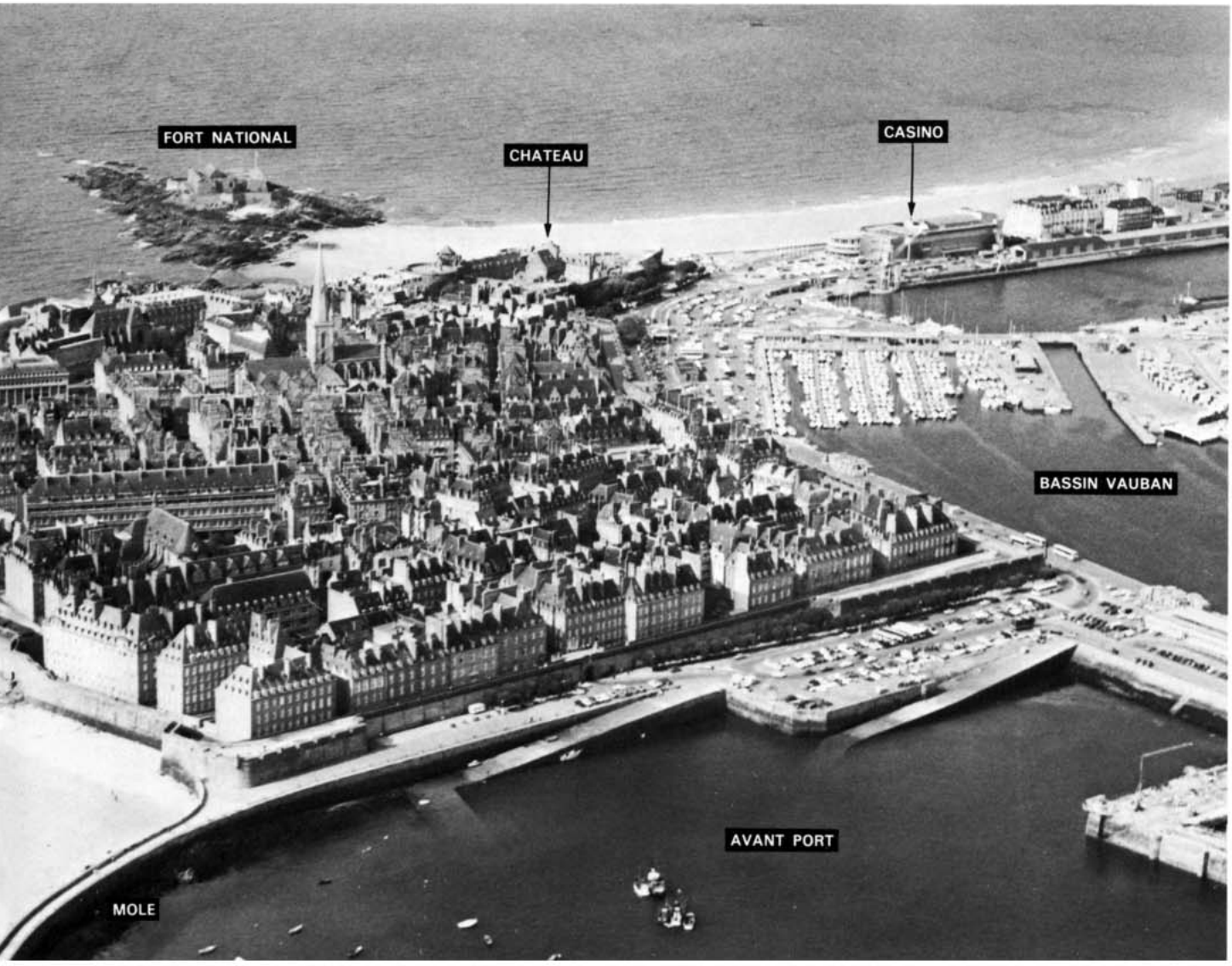
The battery command post lies in the centre of the island, a short distance inland from the beach where one lands, and the observation post a few yards behind it. This faces west as the island defences were intended to fire to seaward but as the guns were all in open emplacements, in emergency these could be swung round to fire inland.

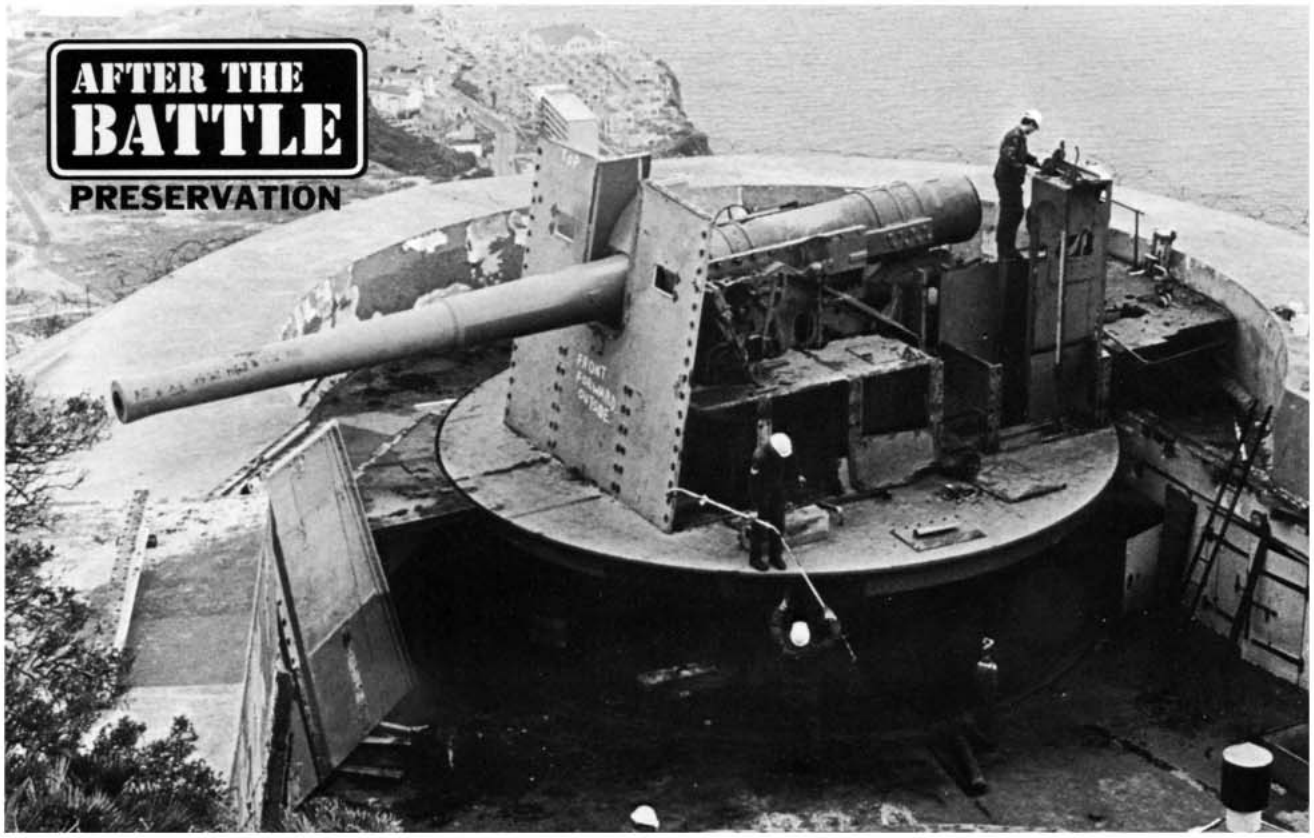
The shelling and bombing of Cezembre by conventional explosive and napalm must have been a spectacular event, and grandstand views were accorded the observers on the coast. We discovered that the American commanders had viewed the proceedings from sumptuous villas on the promontory at Dinard which can clearly be seen by any visitors arriving in St. Malo on the ferry from Portsmouth which passes close by. We had high hopes of emulating the Americans in the photographs and drove around to Dinard across the new hydro-electric tidal barrage which, except for a small lock, now effectively closes the estuary of the Rance to shipping. However, when we arrived at the first chateau, which the

Left: **St. Malo has seen many battles and many seiges during its long history. The lock, demolished by the Germans, was reopened in 1950 (US Army).** *Above:* **With St. Malo's long connection with the sea and ships, nowadays virtually every tall ship visits the port. On June 28, 1981 we were able to photograph the arrival of the Juan Sebastian de Elcano of the Spanish Navy.**

American gunnery observers had used, we found it shuttered and barred like many others around which are mostly used only during the high summer period.

Unable to take a comparison from the same room, we walked along the path at the foot of the cliff to find which villa had been used by General Macon to view the bombing. This turned out to be Greystones in the Boulevard de la Mer — a palatial villa on the cliff edge. Unfortunately (or fortunately depending on your point of view and whether you own it!) the old French lady concierge proved an insurmountable force and there was no way she was prepared to let us take the comparison. Neither would she let us telephone the owner. With our imminent publication date there was no chance of a return visit, so reluctantly we had to settle for a photograph taken on a garden wall. Perhaps some enterprising reader who visits Dinard when the owner is in occupation will be able to complete our story and supply us with a photo which we can include in a future 'follow-up' edition.





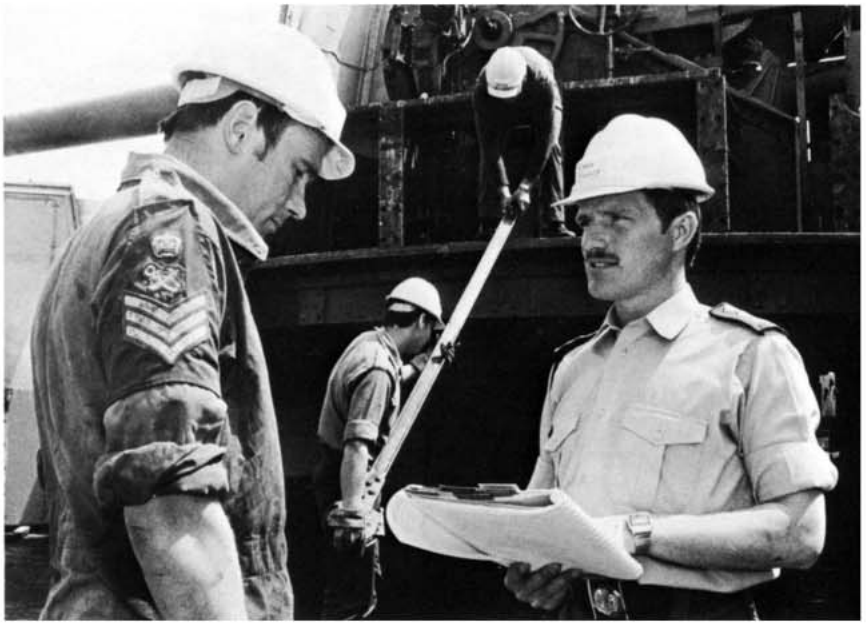
SPUR BATTERY DISMANTLED

BY TERRY GANDER

The Imperial War Museum at Lambeth is charged with the collection, preservation and presentation of as many artefacts and records of the two World Wars as its abilities and budget allow. To this end it has become a vast treasure trove of military records, mementoes, uniforms, equipment, vehicles, weapons and all manner of militaria relating to 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 (and the conflicts since 1945). The IWM collection at Lambeth is a must for all with an interest in military history and the collection is visited annually by thousands including numerous schoolchildren and overseas visitors. The IWM premises in the old Bethlehem Hospital at Lambeth are far too small to house or display the vast IWM collection so the acquisition of the old airfield at Duxford in Cambridgeshire has led this to become the repository of many of the larger items of equipment. However, in one respect, the IWM collection is still incomplete. It does not possess a single example of a type of weapon that was once among the first that any nation provided itself with, and that missing example relates to coast artillery.

At one time the United Kingdom and many Continental nations covered their coastlines with outward-looking fortifications that contained heavy artillery of all calibres, all with the intention of preventing an enemy from approaching the shore to invade or bombard. In the First World War the United Kingdom coastlines bristled with guns and the German and Belgian coasts were covered with heavy batteries. During the Second World War the United Kingdom re-manned the coastal batteries and built many more. The German Atlantic Wall was built to defend the German-occupied territories, and elsewhere the United States looked to her own defences by constructing a huge number of coastal defence batteries, many mounting guns with calibres as large as 16 inches. Every British colony had its own defences as well. The number of guns involved ran into thousands.

After 1945 many of these guns went out of service and, in the scrap-hungry years that followed, many went to the furnaces. The United Kingdom retained a number of important batteries but in 1956 the Coastal Artillery branch of the Army was disbanded



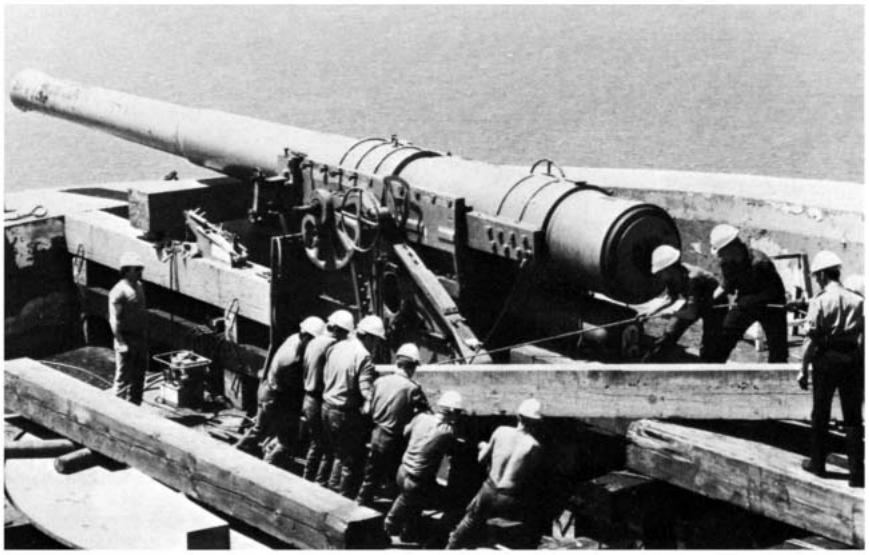
Top: **Spur Battery, installed on Gibraltar's southern face in 1903 is dismantled by the Royal Engineers in 1981. Here the armour plating, added during the Second World War to give the crew protection against strafing from enemy aircraft, is removed.** *Above:* **In charge of the operation was Captain David Foxley, seen here in conversation with Staff Sergeant Bob Beer, a REME artificer attached to the Sappers (Crown Copyright).**

and the last remaining batteries were dismantled. Most of the guns were scrapped soon afterwards and it would have seemed that one complete facet of the Defence of the Realm had been quietly extinguished and forgotten.

Although the in-word 'heritage' is probably used today to excess, it is certainly true to say that as soon as something is, or is about to be, scrapped or demolished, concern is revived in its preservation, although in many cases this renewed interest comes too late. During the past few years, numerous bodies such as the Fortress Study Group have revived an interest in coastal fortifications and their weapons to the extent that the Imperial War Museum realised its lack of any example of a coastal gun, and began a search to try and find an example suitable for preservation and display.

The task was a difficult one. Despite the fact that the last coastal batteries were disbanded only in 1956, the rush to the scrap-yards had been so well organised that no guns appeared to have survived in the United Kingdom. True, there are a few barrels here and there, and numbers of Rifled Muzzle Loaders (RMLs) survive all around our coasts, but of more modern guns there are none. The only examples I know of are two 6-inch guns from a World War I battery in the Shetlands (one of these might be preserved soon as an addition to a fort preservation project at Newhaven) but there are no others. Thus the IWM had to look further afield and the search finally ended at Gibraltar.

As readers of *After the Battle* will be aware, (issue No. 21) Gibraltar still abounds with artillery. The Rock remains one of the few places in the world where coastal artillery of all ages can be seen in its original setting, virtually untouched and almost all of it intact. For the period which concerned the Museum's project much remains there of interest. There are numerous 4-inch barrels on various mountings, the magnificent 6-inch guns of the Devil's Gap Battery, but the crowning glory of the defence of the Rock are the 9.2-inch guns. Five batteries still remain on the Rock: Levant, Spur, Breakneck, O'Hara's and Lord Airey's Batteries. Of these, only Levant Battery can easily be visited, the others being situated on military property behind locked gates. All of them are single-gun batteries each with a 9.2-inch gun, a type of gun that was once one of the most important weapons in the British coastal artillery armoury.

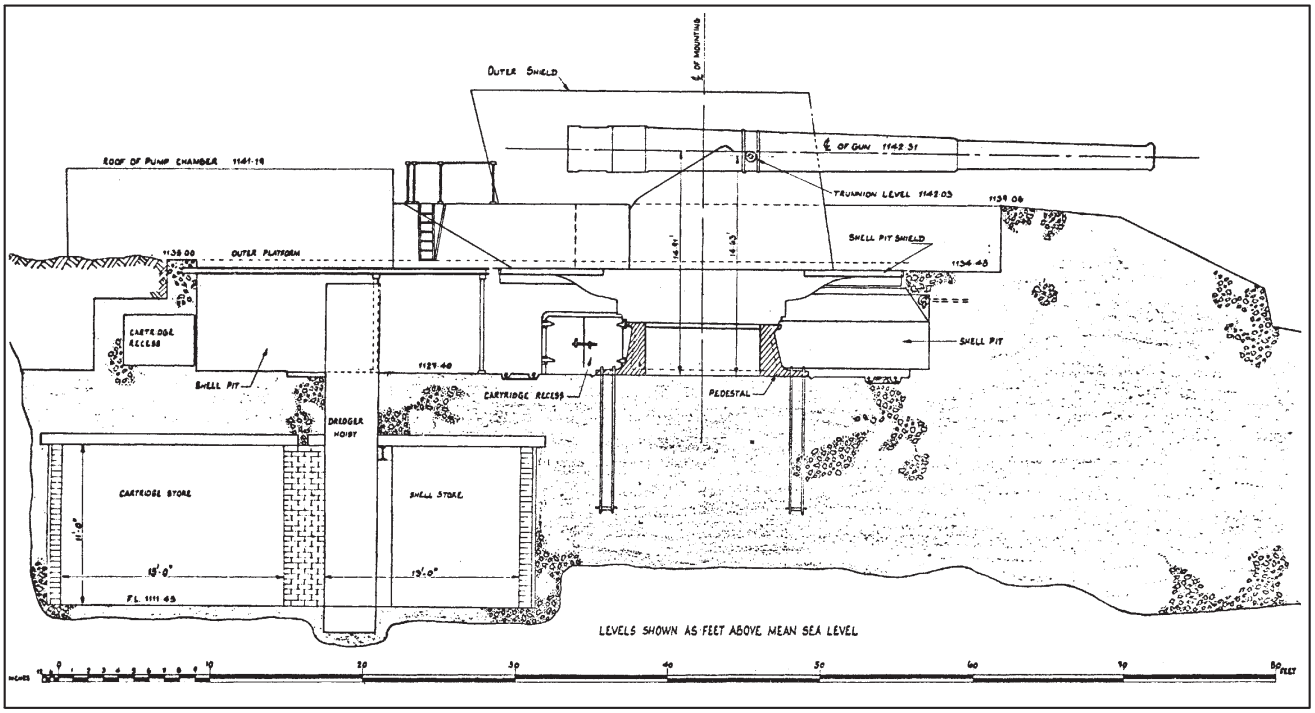


Assembling the elevated 'roadway' behind the gun to support the barrel as it is drawn back from its cradle (T. Gander).

The use of 9.2-inch guns for coastal defence dates back to 1879 when it was decided to adapt naval guns to the coastal defence role. The first examples were the Mark 9 but in 1899 this was changed to the Mark 10 when examples were altered to take a revised breech mechanism and a new form of rifling was introduced. Various mountings were used (not counting the guns that ended up as railway artillery in 1914-1918) but the early mountings that limited elevation to only fifteen degrees (and thus restricted the range) were gradually replaced by later designs that allowed elevations of up to forty-five degrees, but thirty-five degrees was the more usual — this being the Mark 7 mounting. A 9.2-inch gun on a Mark 7 mounting could fire a 380lb shell to a range of 29,600 yards, or 31,300 yards if super-charged. Tales of the accuracy of the 9.2 abound. I have been told many accounts of targets being blown out of the water, but one told me at Gibraltar bears re-telling. At one stage, the early towed wooden targets were replaced by a long water hose which was towed by a fast launch. The launch also pumped water along the hose to the end where it was directed towards the surface in a fountain. As this water fountain was towed along, it exactly resembled the bow wave of a ship and this served as the visual aiming point for the coastal gunners. The trouble was, so I am told, that the Gibraltar 9.2 gunners were so good that they continually kept hitting the fountain, and with it the underwater hose, thus wrecking it for further practice!

It therefore appeared that one of the Gibraltar guns would be an ideal exhibit for the Museum collection at Duxford and during 1979 approaches were made to the Gibraltar Government and the Governor of Gibraltar to sound out local opinion regarding the removal of one of the guns to the IWM. This was favourable in part although, from the outset, two of the guns were immediately ruled out. They were the Lord Airey's and O'Hara's guns, both of which are destined to become the property of the people of Gibraltar as permanent museum pieces. One of them, the

One of the drawings prepared to plan the removal operation (Crown Copyright).



O'Hara's gun, is already treated and preserved as such. It is kept in a magnificent state of full working order along with all its associated ammunition supply equipment, power room (to supply hydraulic power not only for O'Hara's but also the nearby Lord Airey's gun), premises and plant. O'Hara's, to cap its overall uniqueness, must also be regarded as the most scenically attractive of all the gun emplacements in the world. It is perched on the southernmost summit of the Rock overlooking the Strait to Africa and the view has to be seen to be believed. Apart from that, the sight of the preserved gleam of the gun itself is worth the trip from the United Kingdom by itself. If ever you can see the gun when it is proudly displayed 'in action' by the men of the Gibraltar Regiment, then take the chance for it is a unique opportunity to see a form of modern warfare that we will never see again.

So with two guns out of the selective running that left three. One of these was eliminated almost immediately: the Levant Battery gun at the southern base of the Rock emplaced to overcome the visual blinding of the higher guns by the cloud cover of the 'Levanter' that periodically covers the summit. Although at first the Levant gun looked accessible and appeared the easiest to get at, it was ruled out when it was appreciated that to remove it would involve the demolition of part of Lathbury Barracks, only re-built a few years ago.

Breakneck Battery is another of the summit guns at a height of well over 1,200 feet and lies at the end of a narrow road. Access is difficult and there is little enough room to approach it, never mind the working area that would be needed for removal. And thus the choice fell on Spur Battery.

The Spur Battery was originally projected in 1901 and the emplacement itself and the original gun was ready for service in 1903. The battery site is on the sheer south-west face of the Rock, just below O'Hara's, at a height of 1,140 feet. Although it lies at the end of a long, steep and narrow road, and space at the site is very limited, an initial reconnaissance carried out by a small team early in 1980 declared the project feasible.

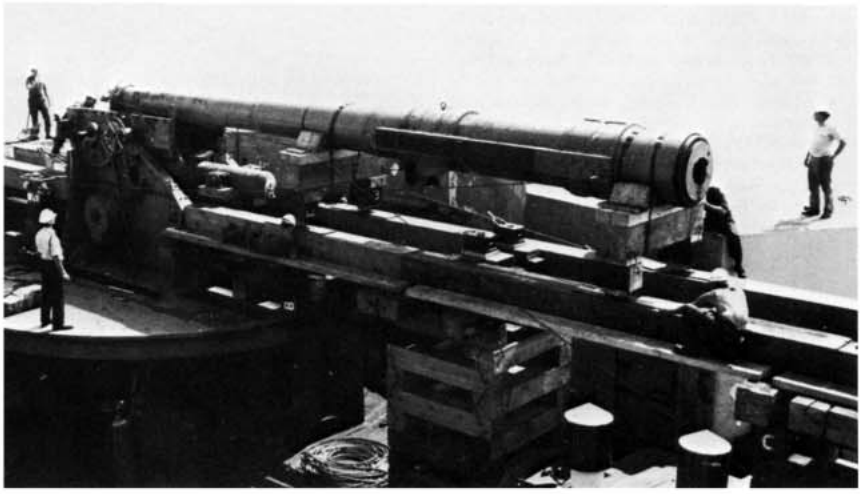
But to revert to the initial idea of bringing home one of the guns. The original idea had come not from the IWM but from the Royal Air Force which provided the impetus that the IWM needed. Early in 1978 the Governor and C-in-C of Gibraltar was Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Sir John Grandy, who subsequently became Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the IWM. The Royal Artillery Institution at Woolwich had also long wanted to acquire a 9.2 and they too were involved from the outset. The final go-ahead came when the Treasury agreed to provide a sum to cover the costs of the operation.

The history of the Royal Engineers and Gibraltar are interwoven and have been ever since the Rock became 'British' in 1704. Apart from the many fortifications that have been constructed by the REs above and within the Rock, the Royal Engineers have also provided the people of Gibraltar with a stadium, parks, water supplies, power stations and roads among many other amenities including a scrap car disposal chute into the depths of the sea. So when it came to the manpower that was to be involved in the removal of the Spur Battery gun, the Royal Engineers were the natural choice.

The initial reconnaissance team was drawn from 63 CRE (Construction) and they surveyed not only the battery site but also established what equipment would be needed. To keep costs down it was decided early on to use as many facilities as already existed at Gibraltar. The approach roads were surveyed, the equipment itself examined in great detail, and advice was taken from as many sources as possible. This included officers and men who knew the 9.2, some of whom were involved in the actual emplacing of 9.2s on the Rock. The initial records of the Spur Battery were not to hand but reports regarding the installation of O'Hara's and Lord Airey's batteries in 1935 were examined in some detail. Copies of gun manuals on the 9.2 were raked out from the files of the Royal School of Artillery at Larkhill and old copies of Coastal Artillery Training manuals dating from 1933 were found and examined. The Royal Air Force was prevailed upon to loan some aircraft accident salvage trollies and the Naval Dockyard was approached for assistance in providing equipment and towing vehicles. Other units on the Rock provided transport and support facilities at one time or another, and the Gibraltar Regiment were called upon to provide the services of their REME fitter. All such admin details were worked out during the initial recce period but many months were to pass before the operation actually began.

From the outset it became all too obvious that dismantling the gun and removing it from the Rock would be be no easy task. For a start, the exposed position of the site meant that the weather had to be taken into account. Despite its generally temperate climate, the Rock can be exposed to severe gales and it would be impossible to safely dismantle the gun in high wind conditions. Thus, much advance planning had to be done, and 1980 was used for preparation with the main party moving to the Rock during the spring of 1981. The Royal Engineer unit involved was 36 Field Regiment based at Maidstone with the men being drawn in the main from 61 Field Support Squadron with some men from 20 Field Squadron and other units. The project was under the care and guidance of Captain David Foxley and the initial work parties were organised by WO2 Joe Whiston.

The first job was to demolish the rear walls of the battery to gain access to the gun and its associated equipment for, apart from the gun, the IWM had requested that the associated mounting, hydraulic gear, power generator and other such parts be removed as well. The early days of the dismantling were made miserable by almost incessant rain and high winds and the work party was frequently wet through but the work was on a tight schedule and went ahead regardless. The underground hydraulic gear was removed as were the gun housing, the ammunition rammer and much of the ancilliary gear. The gun housing was a World War II addition to provide cover for the crew against aircraft attack. This was not the only modernisation the gun had received for the mounting was changed in 1935 from the



The most tricky part of the operation was the removal of the 27-ton barrel, thirty-eight feet long, which had to be carefully winched backwards onto the roadway, supervised by WO2 Joe Whiston on the left (T. Gander).

SSM Mick Rush keeps a watchful eye on the critical roller skates as they carry the barrel along the timber beams (T. Gander).

Once the barrel was free of the cradle and totally supported by the timber trestles, the centre pier was carefully dismantled. Then slowly it was lowered, one end at a time, onto two RAF salvage trollies ready for the descent down Spur Battery Road (T. Gander).

early, limited-elevation Mark 5 mounting to the 35-degree Mark 7 mounting. However, the gun itself remained the same and I made a copy of the markings round the breech which read:

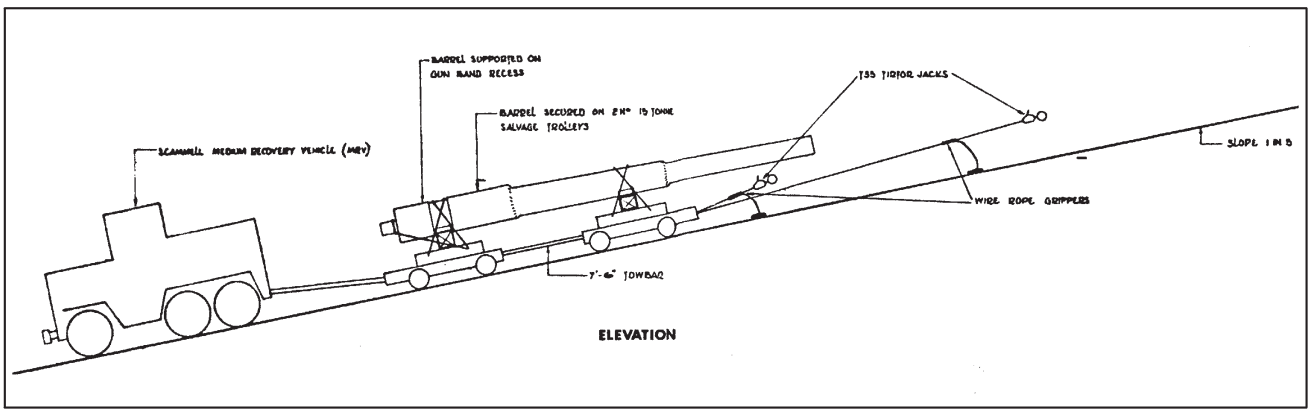
B.L. 9.2-In Wirex N°L246 E.O.C. 1903. (The Mark 7 mounting is serial number 10.)

I arrived in Gibraltar in late May 1981 on the same day that the main working party arrived under the supervision of SSM Mick Rush and was just in time to see the barrel removed from the cradle and mounting. This was to be the crucial point of the dismantling process and perhaps the most risky. The 9.2-inch gun barrel is 38 feet long and its long, slender profile hides the fact that it weighs a hefty 27.5 tons. The barrel itself is some 35 feet above the ground when on the gun for the mounting is not only a large cradle and mounting but the two are themselves on a high turn-table and pedestal for traversing. The main problem facing the team was that the barrel had to be threaded out of its cradle along its entire length and, such was the limited access to the gun site, that no conventional lifting or handling machines could get into a position to assist. The whole operation would have to be done by hand but help from a commercial source came with the donation of Turfor hydraulic jacks to assist with the initial barrel movement. The rest had to be done by hand. That was where the old Coastal Artillery Training handbooks came in, along with the reports of the mounting of the O'Hara's and Lord Airey's guns in the 1930s.

Anyone who knows Gibraltar, even after a very short visit, knows that the roads on the Rock are steep and narrow. They zig-zag their way to the summit at alarming angles and to move such an unwieldy load as a long and heavy gun barrel up to the Rock summit was no mean task in the 1930s. Then the job was carried out using a steam tractor but in 1981 no steam tractor was to hand. Even in the 1930s, they did revert, once on the gun site, to the age-old practice of using timber baulks, winches, joists and muscle-power to actually get the barrel into the gun cradle and to get it out again the Royal Engineers had to resort to the exactly the same methods.

When I arrived the gun was still in its original position in the cradle. All the outer ancilliary gear had been removed, numbered, logged and sent down the Rock for packing ready for shipment. Each dismantling operation was recorded in strict sequence by a sapper clerk who also numbered each part and logged the details in a book that will be used when the time comes to re-assemble the gun at Duxford. The site resembled a timber yard with massive joists stacked ready for use and the first 'tower' being assembled. The idea was to build three timber towers behind the gun and a long timber baulk 'roadway' across them along which the barrel would travel. Between the towers were placed the RAF salvage trailers that would ultimately carry the barrel down the Rock. It sounds simple enough on paper, and a glance at the photographs will give an idea of the arrangement, but it was very hard work as all

Schematic drawings were produced to plan the move down the narrow road to the Dockyard (Crown Copyright).


BARREL SUPPORTED ON GUN BAND RECESS
BARREL SECURED ON 2 Nº 15 TONNE SALVAGE TROLLEYS
T35 TIRFOR JACKS
SCAMMELL MEDIUM RECOVERY VEHICLE (MRV)
SLOPE 1 IN 5
WIRE ROPE GRIPPLES
7'-6" TOWBAR
ELEVATION

the timber had to be handled manually. The heaviest baulks were 16in x 16in used for the elevated roadway which was ultimately twenty feet long. They weighed twelve to fifteen hundredweight each and had to be raised and placed into position by muscle-power alone.

Once the tower and roadway were built it all had to be carefully checked for alignment and each baulk was secured in place by end tie-staples. It was all a reversion to former practices and a task far from the usual ones the mechanised Royal Engineers are normally called upon to perform in the 1980s.

When all the timber work had been assembled and the jacks and the cables put in position, the pulling task began. The Turfor jacks took the initial load and the barrel was gradually eased back. The main load was carried on heavy duty skates, small all-steel roller caterpillars. These skates are standard Engineer equipment and are usually used to carry Medium Girder Bridge components. On the elevated roadway the weight was borne by heavy steel plates which were moved by hand to remain in front of the skate as it travelled. Every inch was carefully monitored and any deviation or wandering of the skate was corrected in the time-honoured manner of hitting it with a sledge-hammer. A slight hitch occurred when the gun barrel sleeve attaching it to the gun recoil mechanism necessitated a further lift upwards but joists and heavy duty jacks overcame that problem and, once out of the cradle, hand winches dragged the barrel out along the elevated roadway. The whole movement took hours before it was free of the cradle whereupon hand winches were anchored to stablise the load.

I would have thought that at this stage some form of celebration would have been in order but at once the work to lower the barrel onto the salvage trollies began. The centre tower was removed leaving the barrel slung between the two end piers. Then the lowering began. The weight was taken on standard 40-ton hydraulic jacks that lowered the barrel, first one end, then the other, a few inches at a time, down towards the trollies. Even before the barrel was onto the trollies, the turntable was being prepared for removal by the loosening of heavy screws and bolts that had been in position for forty-six years.

It was at this point that I had to return to the UK but the work continued as I left. Although I had been able to see only one crucial part of the operation, an idea of the loads involved might give some small idea of the size of the overall project:

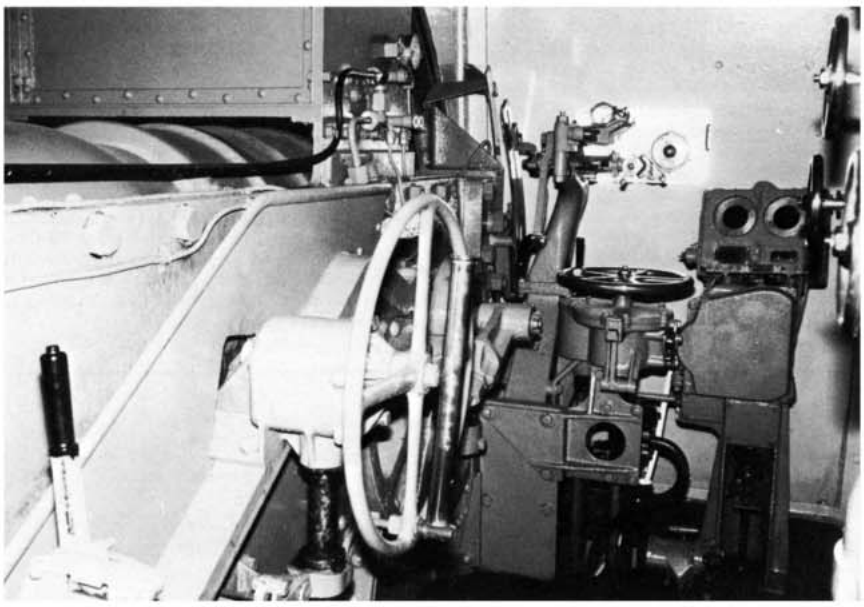
Barrel	27.5 tons
Cradle	10 tons
Body	18 tons
Toller ring	2.5 tons
Pivot plate	9 tons
Pedestal	17 tons (two 8.5-ton pieces)
Baseplate	5 tons
Shell pit shield	20 tons (4 pieces, largest 8 tons)
Control system	10 tons
Total	144 tons

Fortunately some of the later operations were aided by the use of a small mobile crane which, once the barrel was out, could get at the mounting and pedestal although getting the barrel clear was no mean operation. Once the barrel was on the trolleys it had to move over a steep hump in the road surface until it started down the steep incline from the battery. The main load was taken by a Matador tractor borrowed from the Navy Dockyard and, as the barrel travelled down the slope, it was braked by the use of the many steel rings fixed into the Rock alongside the road. Initially these rings, about ten inches across, were fitted to attach pulleys to pull the guns up the Rock but for once they were used to help a gun down. Each ring had been carefully tested beforehand to determine its anchoring capabilites and some of them were found to be not too clever after all the years they had been in position. Where possible these were made good and used for the difficult passage down the Rock. The journey involved a great deal of backing-up and securing as tractor ends were changed until the last stage when two tractors, one forward and one aft, took the barrel on its final journey to the Dockyard through Gibraltar Town which took place at night along closed-off streets.

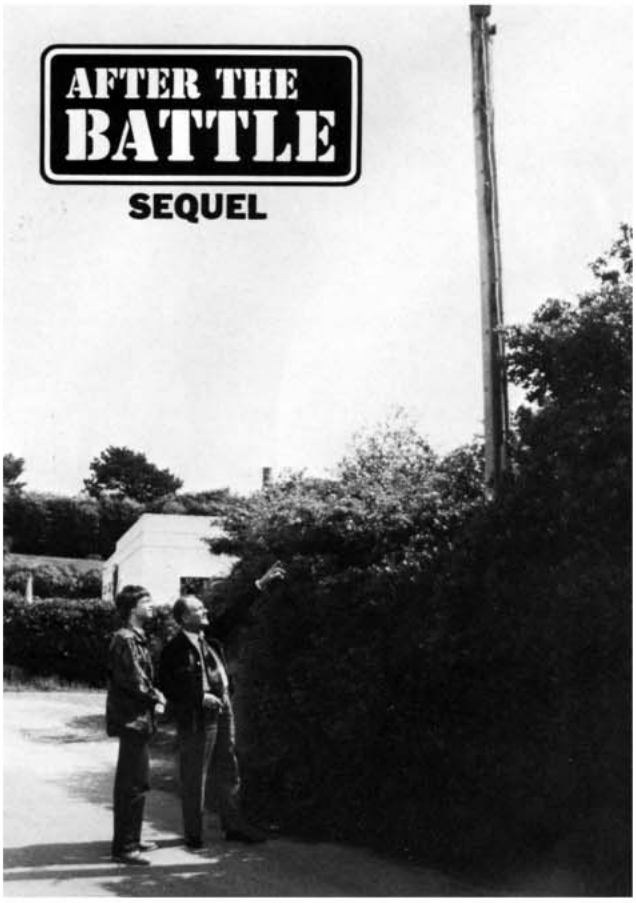
With the barrel out of the way, the rest of the heavy loads were relatively orthodox, but made no easier by the fact that the heavy trucks used had to reverse up the final 400 metres to the battery site. The road is too narrow to allow any turning along its length and even small vehicles have to be reversed with care into a small bay alongside the approach road — as I nearly found to my cost when a 4-tonner came the other way.

Because of the high value of the solid brass breech ring, this had long been removed, together with the breech block, and put into storage. When fully assembled at Duxford airfield in Cambridgeshire, this is how the gun will look. (This photograph is of the similar, sister gun O'Hara's by T. Gander.)

Once at the Dockyard heavy cranes and many hands made loading the gun parts a straightforward task for the journey to Liverpool. Once there the Royal Engineers will deliver it to Duxford where the sections will be sorted out for re-assembly. As yet it is not clear exactly what plans have been made to exhibit the gun at the Duxford site. The main thing is that an important piece of the history of the United Kingdom during two World Wars will be in the hands of persons who will preserve it for future generations. A further barrel will be taken to the Rotunda at Woolwich for students of artillery to examine and so a large gap in our collection of items of national and military importance will be filled at last. One day the Spur Battery Gun will become the Duxford Gun, but for me the sight of it will bring back memories of days in the sun watching an operation the like of which we will probably never see again.



This is the layer's position on O'Hara's, which will be duplicated on the Spur gun at Duxford. One humorous tailpiece which occurred during the dismantling operation is worth recounting. At one stage, the Sappers had to swing the gun barrel back and forth and on one occasion they inadvertantly pointed it directly at Algeciras, the Spanish town nearest Gibraltar. Worried Spanish police were on the telephone within minutes (they keep a constant watch on activities on the Rock) and asked for the gun to be pointed elsewhere! The Sappers were highly amused and obligingly cranked the gun round.



THE COMMANDOS RETURN

Left: **Fred Drain points to the telegraph pole on the Jerbourg peninsula on Guernsey which he climbed in July 1940 to cut the telephone wires.** *Right:* **Bruce Ogden Smith and his wife Sylvia with the Editor on route from La Jaspellerie to the Dixcart Hotel on Sark where Bruce landed in October 1942.**

In May this year (1981), we published *The War in the Channel Islands — Then and Now* — our contribution to the history of the only part of the United Kingdom occupied by the Germans during the Second World War. As part of our plan for the launch of the book we took back two former ex-Servicemen who participated in Commando raids on the Islands to revisit, for the first time, the scenes of their former exploits.

Fred Drain's story was described in our last issue *(see After the Battle No. 32).* He was on the first Commando raid of the war hurriedly mounted in July 1940 barely five weeks after Dunkirk. Fred admits that they were ill-prepared and poorly trained when compared with later Commando operations, and Operation AMBASSADOR to Guernsey was subsequently described by Winston Churchill as 'a silly fiasco'. Fred was one of four men left behind (they were unable to swim out to the boats) and, after hiding up in a deserted hut, they were taken in by an island family until they decided that there was no hope of escape and the only alternative was to give themselves up.

Bruce Ogden Smith took part in three of the seven Commando raids on the Channel Islands while he was a member of the Small-Scale Raiding Force: Operation DRYAD to the Casquets lighthouse (on which operation the entire German crew were captured); Operation BRANFORD to the small uninhabited island of Burhou off Alderney, and Operation BASALT to Sark in 1942. This latter raid, although small in conception, was mighty in its repercussions and led Hitler to issue his drastic 'Commando Order' under which his forces were given carte blanche authority to execute any Commando personnel captured in the future.

The purpose of BASALT was to make a landing on Sark and bring back prisoners. The first part of the operation went like clockwork and five Germans were captured while asleep in the annexe to the Dixcart Hotel. Cord had been taken ready to bind the prisoners' hands while the party made its way back through forest and thick scrub down to the MTB. However, when the Germans emerged from the hotel and realised that their captors were only few in number, they began to struggle and try to escape. In the melee one prisoner broke free and raised the alarm and

Fred leads the way down the steps to the beach at Petit Port where the Commandos came ashore.

three others were shot. When the Germans found the bodies, shot with their hands tied together behind their backs, it is understandable that they misinterpreted what had taken place. By the time the reports had reached Hitler's desk no doubt it looked to him like cold-blooded murder and the Kommandobefehl was his characteristic reaction. At the same time prisoners-of-war held by both sides were handcuffed in their thousands in retaliation.

Although we had visited the scenes of both raids in 1979, following the events from the descriptions in the various reports, it was with an air of excitement that we landed in Guernsey with Fred and Bruce and their wives on Sunday, May 31. Fred has a gammy leg as a result of a post-war motor cycle crash whilst serving with the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment yet he was adamant that he would make it down the 300-odd steps which lead down the cliff at Petit Port to where he came ashore. (It had been the Editor's intention to spare Fred the double journey down and up by landing him back on the beach from the sea but weather conditions made this impossible.)

As we climbed down from the military vehicles of the Guernsey Military Vehicle Conservation Group which had taken us to the Jerbourg peninsula, Fred's eyes misted over as he immediately recognised the pole where he had cut the telephone wires nearly forty-one years previously. Then he had stood on his brother's shoulders to reach the rungs fixed to the post. Today some of the lower brackets were missing but it was still possible to see where they had been.

We set off along the path leading to the steep flight of stairs to the beach. Fred set a brisk pace, memories flooding back at every step. On the beach he went straight to a large rock having identified it as the one on which he had sat whilst being interrogated by the Germans after his capture. For a time we left Fred alone with his memories, understanding what a moving experience it must be to revisit a place which ultimately led to him spending five years in a prisoner-of-war camp.

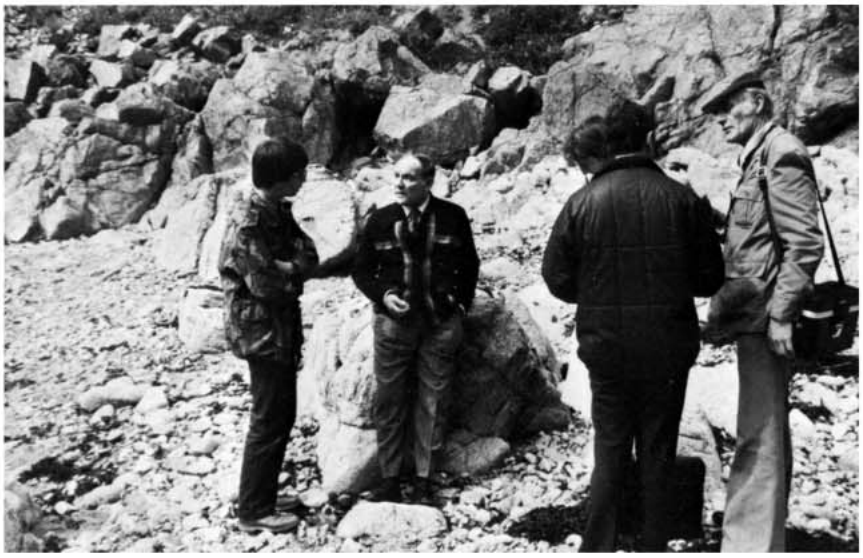
After a while, as if having drunk in every ounce of atmosphere, Fred set off back up the stairway. The climb is a stiff one at the best of times but, if Fred experienced pain from his leg, he did not show it.

Later a quiet, yet tearful reunion took place in a small flat in the parish of the Forest where Walter and Ada Bourgaize now live out their retirement after many years spent managing the Torteval Stores. It was there that Fred and the other three Commandos had been taken in and sheltered after they were left behind. Fred had written one letter to them after he was released at the end of the war and it was a surprise indeed when Walter produced the actual letter he had saved since that day. It transpired that Fred had never known the surname of the family that had helped them and it had been his mother who had addressed the letter on his behalf while he was serving in the army of occupation in Germany.

A few days later, after revisiting the Torteval Stores where he saw the loft where they had hidden, he tried to find the old hut in which they had initially sheltered. Although he felt it was only about 500 yards from Torteval, and he backtracked the route he believed he took at the time, there was no sign of it today — most probably the timber would have been used as firewood during the later days of the war.

The next day we all set out early for our visit to Sark with Bruce Ogden Smith, our trip being covered by a crew from Channel Television. After landing on Sark, unlike our 1979 visit during the preparation of the book (and Bruce's 1942 visit!), we took the easy way and hired a tractor and horse-drawn buggy to transport us around the island.

When we revisit the scenes of former raids and battles for *After the Battle*, regardless of the amount of contemporary information available to us, there must always be an element of guesswork in our research. Official reports, while seemingly detailed to the historian at home, become painfully bare of precise detail when one is trying to establish a location, down to the last yard, where some particular event took place. Thus it was with Operation BASALT. When we retraced the route in 1979, at some points one had to make an educated guess as to the precise spot where a specific incident had occurred. Where exactly did the Commandos come ashore on the Hog's Back? Where exactly did the fight outside the hotel take place? Where exactly did Anders Lassen, one of the Commandos, attack the sentry? . . . And so on. To be able to walk over the ground with someone who was there at the time is a rare pleasure and we take every opportunity to share these experiences with our readers.



Fred leans against the same rock which he sat on forty-one years previously when interrogated by the Germans.

Bruce immediately pointed out the room in the annexe to the Dixcart Hotel (the first door on the left) where he had taken his prisoner and quickly indicated the spot where the fight had occurred. As this is now part of the hotel gardens, it was an ideal location for our TV interview although one had to try to appreciate how it would have looked forty years before, remembering that it was almost pitch black at the time.

We then retraced the route back to where the Commando party had stopped to send one man forward to reconnoitre the hotel. The spot they had chosen (just on the bend in the track from La Jaspellerie — a large house on the cliff top standing all alone) was just the place you or I would have chosen, proving that educated guesses do sometimes turn out to be correct!

At La Jaspellerie we had made one mistake however. We knew that the Commandos had gained entry by breaking a window in the French doors. Unfortunately there are two pairs of doors on the rear verandah and we chose the wrong ones for our photo *(see The War in the Channel Islands — Then and Now, page 151)*. Bruce went straight to the other door and even indicated the pane they had broken. Even more incredible was the fact that we found fragments of old broken glass underneath leaves and earth directly below the wooden-slatted verandah. Had we found these whilst on our previous visit they could not have really been held to prove anything but, in the present circumstances, their attribution to that October night in 1942 was assured.

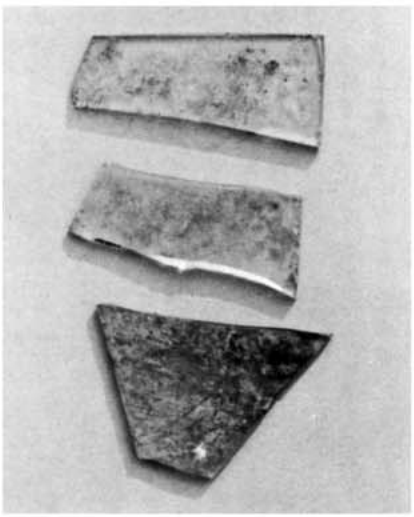
Sparing Bruce a clamber through the

Emotional reunion with Ada and Walter Bourgaize who had sheltered Fred and three other Commandos before they gave themselves up.

Bruce at the Dixcart Hotel being interviewed by Alister Layzell of Channel Television on the spot where the fight had taken place.

thickly wooded forest of the Dixcart Valley, we took our horse and cart by a roundabout route to the Hog's Back. There he described how the party had stumbled along in the dark, each man with a hand on the shoulder of the man in front. Then Bruce had received hundreds of thorn splinters in his hands but today our walk was more like a nature ramble — wild flowers were profuse, the sun was warm and the sea and sky were clear. Reaching the very tip of the promontory, Bruce pointed out the exact flat piece of rock on which they had stepped ashore — back to the very beginning of the story in true *After the Battle* style.

Later that evening in our hotel (the Manor, the old quarters used by the Luftwaffe on Guernsey) an amusing tailpiece to our trip took place. Although unaware of the real reasons at the time, it suddenly dawned on Fred that when he had been handcuffed in his POW camp in 1942, it was as a direct result of what Bruce, sitting opposite, had done on Sark! Drinks were ordered and a toast was drunk between these two men . . . it was a pleasure indeed to have been the catalyst to have made this memorable reunion possible.



Above: **We restrained Bruce from breaking into La Jaspellerie again — instead we found some of the old glass beneath the verandah.** *Below:* **Bruce on the Hog's Back.**